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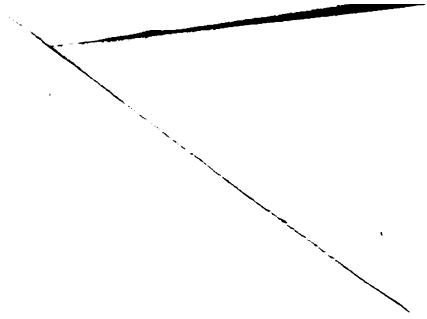

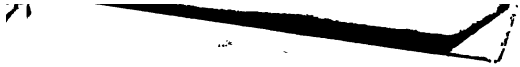

THE

WORKS

OF

MRS. CHAPONE:

NOW FIRST COLLECTED.

CONTAINING

I. LETTERS ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE MIND.
II. MISCELLANIES.
III. CORRESPONDENCE WITH MR. RICHARDSON.
IV. LETTERS TO MISS CARTER.
V. FUGITIVE PIECES.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

AN ACCOUNT OF HER LIFE AND CHARACTER,

DRAWN UP

BY HER OWN FAMILY.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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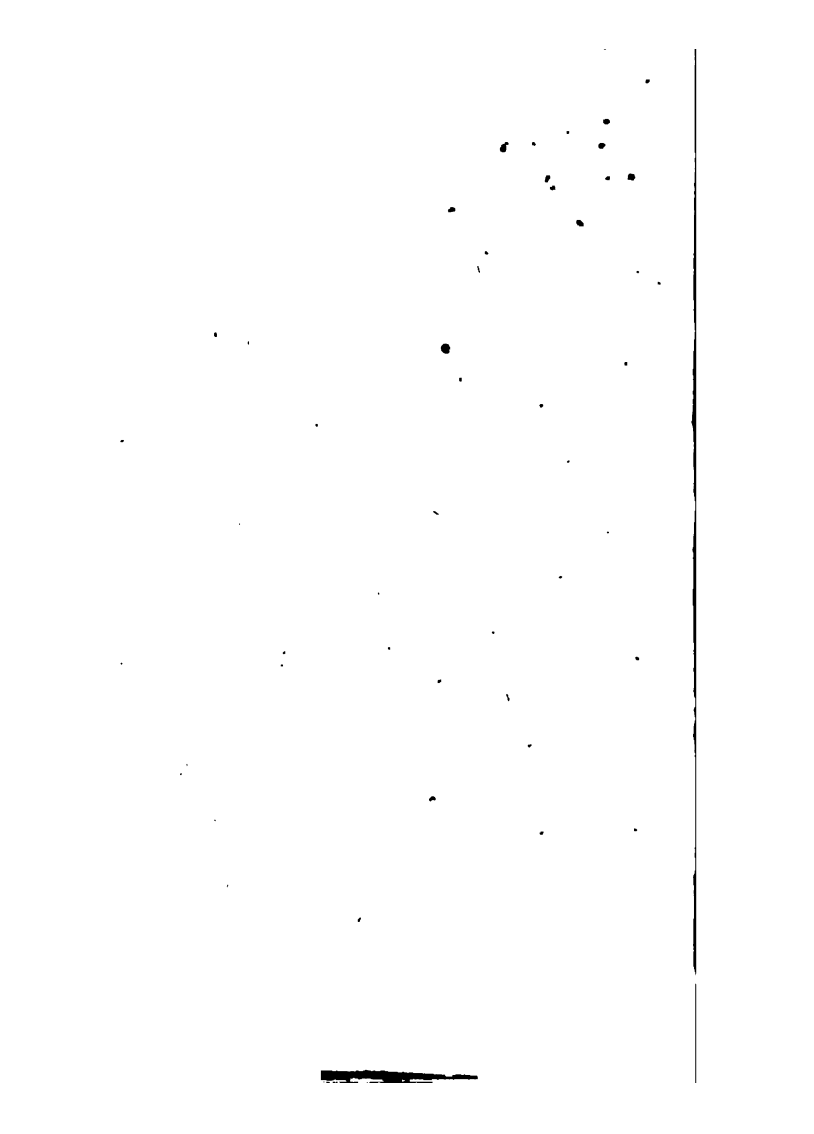

LETTER I.

ON THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF RELIGION.

My dearest Niece,

THOUGH you are so happy as to have parents, who are both capable and desirous of giving you all proper instruction, yet I, who love you so tenderly, cannot help fondly wishing to contribute something, if possible, to your improvement and welfare: and, as I am so far separated from you, that it is only by pen and ink I can offer you my sentiments, I will hope that your attention may be engaged, by seeing on paper, from the hand of one of your warmest friends, Truths of the highest importance, which, though you may not find new, can never be too deeply engraven on your mind. Some of them, perhaps, may make no great impression at present, and yet may so far gain a place in your memory, as readily to return to your thoughts when occasion recalls them. And, if you pay me the compliment of preserving my letters, you may possibly reperuse them at some future period, when concurring circumstances may give them additional weight; and thus they may prove more effectual than the same things spoken in conversation. But, however this may prove, I cannot resist the desire of

trying to be in some degree useful to you, on your setting out in a life of trial and difficulty; your success in which must determine your fate for ever.

Hitherto you have "thought as a child, and understood as a child;" but it is time "to put away childish things." You are now in your fifteenth year, and must soon act for yourself; therefore it is high time to store your mind with those principles, which must direct your conduct and fix your character. If you desire to live in peace and honour, in favour with God and man, and to die in the glorious hope of rising from the grave to a life of endless happiness; if these things appear worthy your ambition, you must set out in earnest in the pursuit of them. Virtue and happiness are not attained by chance, nor by a cold and languid approbation; they must be sought with ardour, attended to with diligence, and every assistance must be eagerly embraced that may enable you to obtain them. Consider, that good and evil are now before you; that, if you do not heartily choose and love the one, you must undoubtedly be the wretched victim of the other. Your trial is now begun; you must either become one of the glorious *children* of *God*, who are to rejoice in his love for ever, or a *child* of *destruction*—miserable in this life, and punished with eternal death hereafter. Surely, you will

be impressed by so awful a situation! you will earnestly pray to be directed into that road of life, which leads to excellence and happiness; and, you will be thankful to every kind hand that is held out, to set you forward in your journey.

The first step must be to awaken your mind to a sense of the importance of the task before you; which is no less than to bring your frail nature to that degree of christian perfection, which is to qualify it for immortality, and, without which, it is necessarily incapable of happiness; for, it is a truth never to be forgotten, that God has annexed happiness to virtue, and misery to vice, by the unchangeable nature of things; and that a wicked being (while he continues such) is in a natural incapacity of enjoying happiness, even with the concurrence of all those outward circumstances, which in a virtuous mind would produce it.

As there are degrees of virtue and vice, so are there of reward and punishment, both here and hereafter: but, let not my dearest niece aim only at escaping the dreadful doom of the wicked; let your desires take a nobler flight, and aspire after those transcendent honours, and that brighter crown of glory, which await those who have excelled in virtue; and, let the animating thought, that every secret effort to gain his favour is noted by your all-seeing judge, who will, with infinite

goodness, proportion your reward to your labours, excite every faculty of your soul to please and serve him. To this end, you must *inform your understanding* what you ought to *believe*, and to *do*. You must *correct* and *purify* your *heart*; cherish and improve all its good affections; and continually mortify and subdue those that are evil. You must *form* and *govern* your *temper* and *manners*, according to the laws of benevolence and justice; and qualify yourself, by all means in your power, for an *useful* and *agreeable* member of society. All this you see is no light business, nor can it be performed without a sincere and earnest application of the mind, as to its great and constant object. When once you consider life, and the duties of life, in this manner, you will listen eagerly to the voice of instruction and admonition, and seize every opportunity of improvement; every useful hint will be laid up in your heart, and your chief delight will be in those persons, and those books, from which you can learn true wisdom.

The only sure foundation of human virtue is *religion*, and the foundation and first principle of religion is the belief of the one only God, and a just sense of his attributes. This you will think you have learned long since, and possess in common with almost every human creature in this

enlightened age and nation? but, believe me, it is less common than you imagine, to believe in the true God; that is, to form such a notion of the Deity as is agreeable to truth, and consistent with those infinite perfections, which all profess to ascribe to him. To form worthy notions of the supreme Being, as far as we are capable, is essential to true religion and morality; for as it is our duty to imitate those qualities of the Divinity, which are imitable by us, so is it necessary we should know what they are, and fatal to mistake them. Can those who think of God with servile dread and terror, as of a gloomy tyrant, armed with almighty power to torment and destroy them, be said to believe in the true God? in that God who, the scriptures say, is love? The kindest and best of Beings, who made all creatures in bountiful goodness, that he might communicate to them some portion of his own unalterable happiness! who condescends to style himself our Father! and, who pitieth us, as a father pitieth his own children! Can those who expect to please God by cruelty to themselves, or to their fellow creatures; by horrid punishments of their own bodies for the sin of their souls; or, by more horrid persecution of others for difference of opinion, be called true believers? Have they not set up another God in their own minds, who rather resembles the worst of beings

than the best? Nor do those act on surer principles who think to gain the favour of God by senseless enthusiasm and frantic raptures, more like the wild excesses of the most depraved human love, than that reasonable adoration, that holy reverential love, which is due to the pure and holy Father of the universe. Those likewise, who murmur against his providence, and repine under the restraint of his commands, cannot firmly believe him infinitely wise and good. If we are not disposed to trust him for future events, to banish fruitless anxiety, and to believe that all things work together for good to those that love him, surely we do not really believe in the God of mercy and truth. If we wish to avoid all remembrance of him, all communion with him, as much as we dare, surely we do not believe him to be the source of joy and comfort, the dispenser of all good.

How lamentable it is, that so few hearts should feel the pleasures of real piety! that prayer and thanksgiving should be performed, as they too often are, not with joy, and love, and gratitude; but with cold indifference, melancholy dejection, or secret horror! It is true, we are all such frail and sinful creatures, that we justly fear to have ended our gracious Father; but, let us remember the condition of his forgiveness: If you have ." He is ready to receive

you when ever you sincerely turn to him; and he is ready to assist you, when you do but desire to obey him. Let your devotion, then, be the language of filial love and gratitude; confide to this kindest of fathers every want and every wish of your heart; but submit them all to his will, and freely offer him the disposal of yourself, and of all your affairs. Thank him for his benefits, and even for his punishments; convinced that these also are benefits, and mercifully designed for your good. Implore his direction in all difficulties; his assistance in all trials; his comfort and support in sickness or affliction; his restraining grace in the time of prosperity and joy. Do not persist in desiring what his providence denies you; but be assured it is not good for you. Refuse not any thing he allots you, but embrace it as the best and properest for you. Can you do less to your heavenly Father than what your duty to an earthly one requires? If you were to ask permission of your father, to do, or to have, any thing you desire, and he should refuse it to you, would you obstinately persist in setting your heart upon it, notwithstanding his prohibition? would you not rather say, My father is wiser than I am; he loves me, and would not deny my request, if it was fit to be granted; I will therefore banish the thought, and cheerfully acquiesce in his will? How much rather should this be said of our hea-

venly Father, whose wisdom cannot be mistaken, and whose bountiful kindness is infinite! Love him, therefore, in the same manner you love your earthly parents, but in a much higher degree, in the highest your nature is capable of. Forget not to dedicate yourself to his service every day; to implore his forgiveness of your faults, and his protection from evil, every night; and this not merely in formal words, unaccompanied by any act of the mind, but "in spirit and in truth;" in grateful love, and humble adoration. Nor let these stated periods of worship be your only communication with him; accustom yourself to think often of him, in all your waking hours; to contemplate his wisdom and power, in the works of his hands; to acknowledge his goodness in every object of use or of pleasure; to delight in giving him praise in your inmost heart, in the midst of every innocent gratification; in the liveliest hour of social enjoyment. You cannot conceive, if you have not experienced, how much such silent acts of gratitude and love will enhance every pleasure; nor what sweet serenity and cheerfulness such reflections will diffuse over your mind. On the other hand, when you are suffering pain or sorrow, when you are confined to an unpleasant situation, or engaged in a painful duty, how will it support and animate you, to refer yourself to your almighty Father! to be assured that he knows

your state and your intentions; that no effort of virtue is lost in his sight, nor the least of your actions or sufferings disregarded or forgotten! that his hand is ever over you, to ward off every real evil, which is not the effect of your own ill conduct, and to relieve every suffering that is not useful to your future well-being!

You see, my dear, that true devotion is not a melancholy sentiment, that depresses the spirits, and excludes the ideas of pleasure, which youth is so fond of: on the contrary, there is nothing so friendly to joy, so productive of true pleasure, so peculiarly suited to the warmth and innocence of a youthful heart. Do not therefore think it too soon to turn your mind to God; but offer him the first-fruits of your understanding and affections: and be assured, that the more you increase in love to him, and delight in his laws, the more you will increase in happiness, in excellence, and honour: that, in proportion as you improve in true piety, you will become dear and amiable to your fellow creatures; contented and peaceful in yourself; and qualified to enjoy the best blessings of this life, as well as to inherit the glorious promise of immortality.

Thus far I have spoken of the first principles of all religion: namely, belief in God, worthy notions of his attributes, and suitable affections towards him; which will naturally excite a sincere desire

of obedience. But, before you can obey his will, you must know what that will is; you must inquire in what manner he has declared it, and where you may find those laws, which must be the rule of your actions.

The great laws of morality are indeed written in our hearts, and may be discovered by reason: but our reason is of slow growth; very unequally dispensed to different persons; liable to error, and confined within very narrow limits in all. If, therefore, God has vouchsafed to grant a particular revelation of his will; if he has been so unspeakably gracious, as to send his son into the world to reclaim mankind from error and wickedness; to die for our sins; and to teach us the way to eternal life; surely it becomes us to receive his precepts with the deepest reverence; to love and prize them above all things; and to study them constantly, with an earnest desire to conform our thoughts, our words, and actions to them.

As you advance in years and understanding, I hope you will be able to examine for yourself the evidences of the christian religion, and be convinced, on rational grounds, of its divine authority. At present, such inquiries would demand more study, and greater powers of reasoning, than your age admits of. It is your part, therefore, till you are capable of understanding the proofs, to believe your parents and teachers, that the holy scriptures

are writings inspired by God, containing a true history of facts, in which we are deeply concerned; a true recital of the laws given by God to Moses, and of the precepts of our blessed Lord and Saviour, delivered from his own mouth to his disciples, and repeated and enlarged upon in the edifying epistles of his Apostles; who were men chosen from amongst those, who had the advantage of conversing with our Lord, to bear witness of his miracles and resurrection; and who, after his ascension, were assisted and inspired by the Holy Ghost. This sacred volume must be the rule of your life. In it you will find all truths necessary to be believed; and plain and easy directions for the practice of every duty. Your Bible then must be your chief study and delight: but, as it contains many various kinds of writing; some parts obscure and difficult of interpretation, others plain and intelligible to the meanest capacity; I would chiefly recommend to your frequent perusal such parts of the sacred writings as are most adapted to your understanding, and most necessary for your instruction. Our Saviour's precepts were spoken to the common people amongst the Jews, and were therefore given in a manner easy to be understood, and equally striking and instructive to the learned and unlearned: for the most ignorant may comprehend them, whilst the wisest must be charmed and awed by the beautiful and

majestic simplicity with which they are expressed. Of the same kind are the Ten Commandments, delivered by God to Moses; which, as they were designed for universal laws, are worded in the most concise and simple manner, yet with a majesty which commands our utmost reverence.

I think you will receive great pleasure, as well as improvement, from the historical books of the Old Testament; provided you read them as an history, in a regular course, and keep the thread of it in your mind, as you go on. I know of none, true or fictitious, that is equally wonderful, interesting, and affecting; or that is told in so short and simple a manner as this, which is, of all histories, the most authentic.

In my next letter, I will give you some brief directions, concerning the method and course I wish you to pursue, in reading the holy scriptures. May you be enabled to make the best use of this most precious gift of God; this sacred treasury of knowledge! May you read the Bible, not as a task, nor as the dull employment of that day only in which you are forbidden more lively entertainments; but with a sincere and ardent desire of instruction; with that love and delight in God's word, which the holy Psalmist so pathetically felt, and described, and which is the natural consequence of loving God and virtue! Though I speak this of the Bible in general, I would not be under-

stood to mean, that every part of the volume is equally interesting. I have already said, that it consists of various matter, and various kinds of books, which must be read with different views and sentiments. The having some general notion of what you are to expect from each book may possibly help you to understand them, and heighten your relish of them. I shall treat you as if you were perfectly new to the whole; for so I wish you to consider yourself; because the time and manner in which children usually read the Bible, are very ill calculated to make them really acquainted with it; and too many people who have read it thus, without understanding it in their youth, satisfy themselves that they know enough of it, and never afterwards study it with attention, when they come to a maturer age.

Adieu, my beloved Niece! If the feelings of your heart, whilst you read my letters, correspond with those of mine whilst I write them, I shall not be without the advantage of your partial affection, to give weight to my advice; for believe me, my own dear girl, my heart and eyes overflow with tenderness, while I tell you, with how warm and earnest prayers for your happiness here, and hereafter, I subscribe myself,

Your faithful friend,

And most affectionate Aunt.

LETTE

ON THE STUDY OF TH

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this, you will easily see, refers to the Messiah, who was to be the blessing and deliverance of all nations. It is amazing that the Jews, possessing this prophecy among many others, should have been so blinded by prejudice, as to have expected, from this great personage, only a temporal deliverance of their own nation from the subjection to which they were reduced under the Romans: it is equally amazing, that some christians should, even now, confine the blessed effects of his appearance upon earth, to this or that particular sect or profession, when he is so clearly and emphatically described as the Saviour of the whole world. The story of Abraham's proceeding to sacrifice his only son at the command of God, is affecting in the highest degree, and sets forth a pattern of unlimited resignation, that every one ought to imitate, in those trials of obedience under temptation, or of acquiescence under afflicting dispensations, which fall to their lot: of this we may be assured, that our trials will be always proportioned to the powers afforded us: if we have not Abraham's strength of mind, neither shall we be called upon to lift the bloody knife against the bosom of an only child; but, if the almighty arm should be lifted up against him, we must be ready to resign him, and all we hold dear, to the divine will. This action of Abraham has been censured by some, who do not attend to the distinction

between obedience to a special command, and the detestably cruel sacrifices of the Heathens, who sometimes voluntarily, and without any divine injunctions, offered up their own children, under the notion of appeasing the anger of their gods. An absolute command from God himself, as in the case of Abraham, entirely alters the moral nature of the action; since he, and he only, has a perfect right over the lives of his creatures, and may appoint whom he will, either angel or man, to be his instrument of destruction. That it was really the voice of God, which pronounced the command, and not a delusion, might be made certain to Abraham's mind, by means we do not comprehend, but which we know to be within the power of *him* who made our souls as well as bodies, and who can control and direct every faculty of the human mind: and we may be assured, that if he was pleased to reveal himself so miraculously, he would not leave a possibility of doubting whether it was a real or an imaginary revelation: thus the sacrifice of Abraham appears to be clear of all superstition, and remains the noblest instance of religious faith and submission that was ever given by a mere man: we cannot wonder that the blessings bestowed on him for it should have been extended to his posterity. This book proceeds with the history of Isaac, which becomes very interesting to us, from the touching

scene I have mentioned; and still more so, if we consider him as the type of our Saviour: it recounts his marriage with Rebecca; the birth and history of his two sons, Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes, and Esau, the father of the Edomites or Idumeans; the exquisitely affecting story of Joseph and his brethren; and of his transplanting the Israelites into Egypt, who there multiplied to a great nation.

In EXODUS, you read of a series of wonders, wrought by the Almighty, to rescue the oppressed Israelites from the cruel tyranny of the Egyptians, who, having first received them as guests, by degrees reduced them to a state of slavery. By the most peculiar mercies and exertions in their favour, God prepared his chosen people to receive, with reverent and obedient hearts, the solemn restitution of those primitive laws, which probably he had revealed to Adam and his immediate descendants, or which, at least, he had made known by the dictates of conscience, but which, time, and the degeneracy of mankind, had much obscured. This important revelation was made to them in the Wilderness of Sinah: there, assembled before the burning mountain, surrounded "with blackness, and darkness, and tempest," they heard the awful voice of God pronounce the eternal law, impressing it on their hearts with circumstances of terror, but without those en-

couragements and those excellent promises, which were afterwards offered to mankind by Jesus Christ. Thus were the great laws of morality restored to the Jews, and through them transmitted to other nations; and by that means a great restraint was opposed to the torrent of vice and impiety, which began to prevail over the world.

To those moral precepts, which are of perpetual and universal obligation, were superadded, by the ministration of Moses, many peculiar institutions, wisely adapted to different ends—either, to fix the memory of those past deliverances which were figurative of a future and far greater salvation; to place inviolable barriers between the Jews and the idolatrous nations, by whom they were surrounded; or, to be the civil law, by which the community was to be governed.

To conduct this series of events, and to establish these laws with his people, God raised up that great prophet Moses, whose faith and piety enabled him to undertake and execute the most arduous enterprises, and to pursue, with unabated zeal, the welfare of his countrymen; even in the hour of death, this generous ardour still prevailed: his last moments were employed in fervent prayers for their prosperity, and, in rapturous gratitude, for the glimpse vouchsafed him of a Saviour, far greater than himself, whom God would one day raise up to his people.

Thus did Moses, by the excellency of his faith, obtain a glorious pre-eminence among the saints and prophets in heaven; while, on earth, he will be ever revered, as the first of those benefactors to mankind, whose labours for the public good have endeared their memory to all ages.

The next book is LEVITICUS, which contains little besides the laws for the peculiar ritual observance of the Jews, and therefore affords no great instruction to us now; you may pass it over entirely: and, for the same reason, you may omit the first eight chapters of NUMBERS. The rest of Numbers is chiefly a continuation of the history, with some ritual laws.

In DEUTERONOMY, Moses makes a recapitulation of the foregoing history, with zealous exhortations to the people faithfully to worship and obey that God, who had worked such amazing wonders for them: he promises them the noblest temporal blessings, if they prove obedient, and adds the most awful and striking denunciations against them, if they rebel, or forsake the true God. I have before observed, that the sanctions of the Mosaic law were *temporal* rewards and punishments, those of the New Testament are *eternal*: these last, as they are so infinitely more forcible than the first, were reserved for the last, best gift to mankind; and were revealed by the Messiah, in the fullest and clearest manner.

Moses, in this book, directs the method in which the Israelites were to deal with the seven nations, whom they were appointed to punish for their profligacy and idolatry; and whose land they were to possess, when they had driven out the old inhabitants. He gives them excellent laws, civil as well as religious, which were ever after the standing municipal laws of that people. This book concludes with Moses' song and death.

The book of JOSHUA contains the conquests of the Israelites over the seven nations, and their establishment in the promised land. Their treatment of these conquered nations must appear to you very cruel and unjust, if you consider it as their own act, unauthorized by a positive command: but they had the most absolute injunctions, not to spare these corrupt people, "to make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy to them, but utterly to destroy them." And the reason is given "lest they should turn away the Israelites from following the Lord, that they might serve other Gods*." The children of Israel are to be considered as instruments in the hand of the Lord, to punish those, whose idolatry and wickedness had deservedly brought destruction on them: this example, therefore, cannot be pleaded in behalf of cruelty, or bring any imputation on the character of the Jews. With regard to other cities, which

* Deut. chap. ii.

did not belong to these seven nations, they were directed to deal with them, according to the common law of arms at that time. If the city submitted, it became tributary, and the people were spared; if it resisted, the men were to be slain, but the women and children saved*. Yet, though the crime of cruelty cannot be justly laid to their charge on this occasion, you will observe, in the course of their history, many things recorded of them, very different from what you would expect from the chosen people of God, if you supposed them selected on account of their own merit: their national character was by no means amiable; and, we are repeatedly told, that they were not chosen for their superior righteousness; "for they were a stiffnecked people, and provoked the Lord with their rebellions from the day they left Egypt." "You have been rebellious against the Lord," says Moses, "from the day that I knew you†." And he vehemently exhorts them, not to flatter themselves that their success was, in any degree, owing to their own merits. They were appointed to be the scourge of other nations, whose crimes rendered them fit objects of divine chastisement. For the sake of righteous Abraham, their founder, and perhaps for many other wise reasons, undiscovered to us, they were select-

* Deut. chap. xx. † Deut. chap. ix. ver. 24.

ed from a world overrun with idolatry, to preserve upon earth the pure worship of the one only God, and to be honoured with the birth of the Messiah amongst them. For this end, they were precluded, by divine command, from mixing with any other people, and defended by a great number of peculiar rites and observances, from falling into the corrupt worship practised by their neighbours.

The book of JUDGES, in which you will find the affecting stories of Sampson and of Jephtha, carries on the history from the death of Joshua, about two hundred and fifty years; but the facts are not told in the times in which they happened, which makes some confusion, and it will be necessary to consult the marginal dates and notes, as well as the index, in order to get any clear idea of the succession of events, during that period.

The history then proceeds regularly through the two books of SAMUEL, and those of KINGS: nothing can be more interesting and entertaining than the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon: but, after the death of Solomon, when ten tribes revolted from his son Rehoboam, and became a separate kingdom, you will find some difficulty in understanding distinctly the histories of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, which are blended together, and, by the likeness of the names, and other particulars, will be apt to confound your mind

without great attention to the different threads thus carried on together: the index here will be of great use to you. The second book of Kings concludes with the Babylonish captivity, five hundred and eighty-eight years before Christ, till which time, the kingdom of Judah had descended uninterruptedly in the line of David.

The first book of CHRONICLES begins with a genealogy from Adam, through all the tribes of Israel and Judah; and the remainder is the same history, which is contained in the books of Kings, with little or no variation, till the separation of the ten tribes: from that period, it proceeds with the history of the kingdom of Judah alone, and gives therefore a more regular and clear account of the affairs of Judah than the book of Kings. You may pass over the first book of Chronicles, and the nine first chapters of the second book; but by all means read the remaining chapters, as they will give you more clear and distinct ideas of the history of Judah than that you read in the second book of Kings. The second of Chronicles ends like the second of Kings, with the Babylonish captivity.

You must pursue the history in the book of EZRA, which gives an account of the return of some of the Jews, on the edict of Cyrus, and of the rebuilding the Lord's temple.

NEHEMIAH carries on the history, for about twelve years, when he himself was governor of Jerusalem, with authority to rebuild the walls, &c.

The story of ESTHER is prior in time to that of Ezra and Nehemiah; as you will see by the marginal dates; however, as it happened during the seventy years captivity, and is a kind of episode, it may be read in its own place.

This is the last of the canonical books that is properly historical; and I would therefore advise, that you pass over what follows, till you have continued the history through the apocryphal books.

The history of JOB is probably very ancient, though that is a point upon which learned men have differed: it is dated, however, 1520 years before Christ: I believe it is uncertain by whom it was written: many parts of it are obscure, but it is well worth studying, for the extreme beauty of the poetry, and for the noble and sublime devotion it contains. The subject of the dispute, between Job and his pretended friends, seems to be, whether the Providence of God distributes the rewards and punishments of this life, in exact proportion to the merit or demerit of each individual. His antagonists suppose that it does; and therefore infer from Job's uncommon calamities, that, notwithstanding his apparent righteousness, he was in reality a grievous sinner: they

aggravate his supposed guilt, by the imputation of hypocrisy, and call upon him to confess it, and to acknowledge the justice of his punishment. Job asserts his own innocence and virtue in the most pathetic manner, yet does not presume to accuse the supreme Being of injustice. Elihu attempts to arbitrate the matter, by alleging the impossibility that so frail and ignorant a creature as man should comprehend the ways of the Almighty, and, therefore, condemns the unjust and cruel inference the three friends had drawn from the sufferings of Job. He also blames Job for the presumption of acquitting himself of all iniquity, since the best of men are not pure in the sight of God, but all have something to repent of; and he advises him to make this use of his afflictions. At last, by a bold figure of poetry, the supreme Being himself is introduced, speaking from the whirlwind, and silencing them all by the most sublime display of his own power, magnificence, and wisdom, and of the comparative littleness and ignorance of man. This indeed is the only conclusion of the argument which could be drawn, at a time when life and immortality were not yet brought to light. A future retribution is the only satisfactory solution of the difficulty arising from the sufferings of good people in this life.

Next follow THE PSALMS, with which you cannot be too conversant. If you have any taste, either for poetry or devotion, they will be your delight, and will afford you a continual feast. The Bible translation is far better than that used in the Common-prayer Book; and will often give you the sense, when the other is obscure. In this, as well as in all other parts of the scripture, you must be careful always to consult the margin, which gives you the corrections made since the last translation, and is generally preferable to the words of the text. I would wish you to select some of the Psalms that please you best, and get them by heart; or, at least, make yourself mistress of the sentiments contained in them: Dr. Delany's Life of David will shew you the occasions on which several of them were composed, which add much to their beauty and propriety, and by comparing them with the events of David's life, you will greatly enhance your pleasure in them. Never did the spirit of true piety breathe more strongly than in these divine songs; which, being added to a rich vein of poetry, makes them more captivating to my heart and imagination than any thing I ever read. You will consider how great disadvantages any poem must sustain from being rendered literally into prose, and then imagine how beautiful these must be in the original. May you be enabled, by reading them fre-

quently, to transfuse into your own breast that holy flame which inspired the writer! To delight in the Lord, and in his laws, like the Psalmist—to rejoice in him always, and to think "one day in his courts better than a thousand!" But, may you escape the heart-piercing sorrow of such repentance as that of David, by avoiding sin, which humbled this unhappy king to the dust; and which cost him such bitter anguish, as it is impossible to read of without being moved. Not all the pleasures of the most prosperous sinner could counterbalance the hundredth part of those sensations, described in his penitential Psalms; and which must be the portion of every man, who has fallen from a religious state into such crimes, when once he recovers a sense of religion and virtue, and is brought to a real hatred of sin: however available such repentance may be to the safety and happiness of the soul after death, it is a state of such exquisite suffering here, that one cannot be enough surprised at the folly of those, who indulge in sin, with the hope of living to make their peace with God by repentance. Happy are they who preserve their innocence unsullied by any great or wilful crimes, and who have only the common failings of humanity to repent of; these are sufficiently mortifying to a heart deeply smitten with the love of virtue and wi
of perfection. There are many ver

phecies of the Messiah, in these divine songs; particularly in Psalm xxii. Such may be found scattered up and down almost throughout the Old Testament. To bear testimony to him is the great and ultimate end for which the spirit of prophecy was bestowed on the sacred writers: but this will appear more plainly to you, when you enter on the study of prophecy, which you are now much too young to undertake.

The PROVERBS and ECCLESIASTES are rich stores of wisdom; from which I wish you to adopt such maxims as may be of infinite use, both to your temporal and eternal interest. But, detached sentences are a kind of reading not proper to be continued long at a time; a few of them, well chosen and digested, will do you much more service than to read half a dozen chapters together; in this respect they are directly opposite to the historical books, which, if not read in continuation, can hardly be understood, or retained to any purpose.

The SONG OF SOLOMON is a fine poem; but its mystical reference to religion lies too deep for a common understanding: if you read it therefore, it will be rather as matter of curiosity than of edification.

Next follow the PROPHECIES, which, though highly deserving the greatest attention and study, I think you had better omit for some years, and

then read them with a good exposition; as they are much too difficult for you to understand, without assistance. Dr. Newton on the Prophecies will help you much, whenever you undertake this study; which you should by all means do, when your understanding is ripe enough; because one of the main proofs of our religion rests on the testimony of the prophecies; and they are very frequently quoted, and referred to, in the New Testament: besides, the sublimity of the language and sentiments, through all the disadvantages of antiquity and translation, must, in very many passages, strike every person of taste; and the excellent moral and religious precepts found in them must be useful to all.

Though I have spoken of these books, in the order in which they stand, I repeat that they are not to be read in that order; but that the thread of the history is to be pursued, from Nehemiah, to the first book of the MACCABEES, in the Apocrypha; taking care to observe the Chronology regularly, by referring to the Index, which supplies the deficiencies of this history, from *Josephus's Antiquities of the Jews*. The first of Maccabees carries on the story, till within 195 years of our Lord's circumcision: the second book is the same narrative, written by a different hand, and does not bring the history so forward as the first; so that, it may be entirely omitted, unless

you have the curiosity to read some particulars of the heroic constancy of the Jews, under the tortures inflicted by their heathen conquerors, with a few other things not mentioned in the first book.

You must then connect the history by the help of the Index, which will give you brief heads of the changes that happened in the state of the Jews, from this time, till the birth of the Messiah.

The other books of the Apocrypha, though not admitted as of sacred authority, have many things well worth your attention; particularly the admirable book called ECCLESIASTICUS, and the BOOK OF WISDOM. But, in the course of reading which I advise, these must be omitted till after you have gone through the Gospels and Acts, that you may not lose the historical thread. I must reserve, however, what I have to say to you, concerning the New Testament, to another letter.

Adieu, my dear!

LETTER III.

ON THE STUDY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. CONTINUED.

My Dearest Niece,

WE come now to that part of scripture, which is the most important of all, and which you must make your constant study, not only till you are thoroughly acquainted with it, but all your life long; because, how often soever repeated, it is

impossible to read the life and death of our blessed Saviour, without renewing and increasing in our hearts that love and reverence, and gratitude towards him, which is so justly due for all he did, and suffered, for us! Every word that fell from his lips is more precious than all the treasures of the earth; for his "are the words of eternal life!" They must therefore be laid up in your heart, and constantly referred to, on all occasions, as the rule and direction of all your actions; particularly those very comprehensive moral precepts he has graciously left with us, which can never fail to direct us aright, if fairly and honestly applied: such as "*whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them.*" There is no occasion, great or small, on which you may not safely apply this rule, for the direction of your conduct: and, whilst your heart honestly adheres to it, you can never be guilty of any sort of injustice or unkindness. The two great commandments, which contain the summary of our duty to God and man, are no less easily retained, and made a standard by which to judge our own hearts. "*To love the Lord our God, with all our hearts, with all our minds, with all our strength; and our neighbour* (or fellow creature) *as ourselves.*" "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour," therefore, if you have true benevolence, you will never do any thing injurious to individuals, or to

society. Now, all crimes whatever, are (in their remoter consequences, at least, if not immediately, and apparently) injurious to the society in which we live. It is impossible *to love God*, without desiring to please him, and, as far as we are able, to resemble him; therefore, the love of God must lead to every virtue in the highest degree; and, we may be sure, we do not truly love him, if we content ourselves with avoiding flagrant sins, and do not strive, in good earnest, to reach the greatest degree of perfection we are capable of. Thus do those few words direct us to the highest Christian virtue. Indeed, the whole tenor of the gospel is to offer us every help, direction, and motive, that can enable us to attain that degree of perfection, on which depends our eternal good.

What an example is set before us in our blessed Master! How is his whole life, from earliest youth, dedicated to the pursuit of true wisdom, and to the practice of the most exalted virtue! When you see him, at *twelve years of age*, in the temple, amongst the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions, on the subject of religion, and astonishing them all with his understanding and answers; you will say, perhaps, "Well might the Son of God, even at those years, be far wiser than the aged; but can a mortal child emulate such heavenly wisdom? Can such a pattern be

proposed to *my* imitation?" Yes, my dear; remember that he has bequeathed to you his heavenly wisdom, as far as concerns your own good. He has left you such declarations of his will, and of the consequences of your actions, as you are, even now, fully able to understand, if you will but attend to them. If then you will imitate his zeal for knowledge, if you will delight in gaining information and improvement; you may even now become "*wise unto salvation.*" Unmoved by the praise he acquired amongst these learned men, you see him meekly return to the subjection of a child, under those who appeared to be his parents, though he was in reality their Lord: you see him return to live with them, to work for them, and to be the joy and solace of their lives; till the time came, when he was to enter on that scene of public action, for which his heavenly father had sent him from his own right hand to take upon him the form of a poor carpenter's son. What a lesson of humility is this, and of obedience to parents! When, having received the glorious testimony from heaven, of his being the beloved Son of the most High, he enters on his public ministry, what an example does he give us, of the most extensive and constant benevolence! how are all his hours spent in doing good to the souls and bodies of men! not the meanest sinner is below his notice: to reclaim and save them, he con-

descends to converse familiarly with the most corrupt, as well as the most abject. All his miracles are wrought to benefit mankind; not one to punish and afflict them. Instead of using the almighty power, which accompanied him, to the purpose of exalting himself and treading down his enemies, he makes no other use of it than to heal and to save.

When you come to read of his sufferings and death, the ignominy and reproach, the sorrow of mind, and torment of body which he submitted to; when you consider that it was all for our sakes; "that by his stripes we are healed," and by his death we are raised from destruction to everlasting life; what can I say that can add any thing to the sensations you must then feel? No power of language can make the scene more touching than it appears in the plain and simple narrations of the evangelists. The heart that is unmoved by it can be scarcely human: but, my dear, the emotions of tenderness and compunction, which almost every one feels in reading this account, will be of no avail unless applied to the true end, unless it inspires you with a sincere and warm affection towards your blessed Lord; with a firm resolution to obey his commands; to be his faithful disciple; and ever to renounce and abhor those sins, which brought mankind under divine condemnation, and from which we have been redeemed, at so dear a

rate. Remember that the title of Christian, or follower of Christ, implies a more than ordinary degree of holiness and goodness. As our motives to virtue are stronger than those which are afforded to the rest of mankind, our guilt will be proportionably greater if we depart from it.

Our Saviour appears to have had three great purposes, in descending from his glory, and dwelling amongst men. The first, to teach them true virtue, both by his example and precepts: the second, to give them the most forcible motives to the practice of it, by "bringing life and immortality to light:" by shewing them the certainty of a resurrection and judgment, and the absolute necessity of obedience to God's laws. The third, to sacrifice himself for us, to obtain by his death the remission of our sins upon our repentance and reformation, and the power of bestowing on his sincere followers the inestimable gift of immortal happiness.

What a tremendous scene of the *last day* does the gospel place before our eyes! of *that day* when you, and every one of us, shall awake from the grave, and behold the Son of God, on his glorious tribunal, attended by millions of celestial beings, of whose superior excellence we can now form no adequate idea: When in presence of all mankind, of those holy angels, and of the great judge himself, you must give an account of your past life,

and hear your final doom, from which there can be no appeal, and which must determine your fate, to all eternity. Then think, if for a moment you can bear the thought, what will be the desolation, shame and anguish of those wretched souls, who shall hear these dreadful words; "*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*" Oh! my beloved child! I cannot support even the idea of your becoming one of those undone, lost creatures! I trust in God's mercy, that you will make a better use of that knowledge of his will, which he has vouchsafed you, and of those amiable dispositions he has given you. Let us therefore turn from this horrid, this insupportable view, and rather endeavour to imagine, as far as is possible, what will be the sensations of your soul, if you shall hear our heavenly judge address you in these transporting words: "*Come, thou blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world.*" Think what it must be, to become an object of the esteem and applause, not only of all mankind assembled together, but of all the host of heaven, of our blessed Lord himself; nay, of his and our almighty Father: to find your frail flesh changed in a moment into a glorious celestial body, endowed with perfect beauty, health, and agility; to find your soul cleansed from all its faults and infirmities; exalted to the purest and noblest affec-

tions; overflowing with divine love and rapturous gratitude! to have your understanding enlightened and refined, your heart enlarged and purified, and every power, and disposition of mind and body, adapted to the highest relish of virtue and happiness! Thus accomplished, to be admitted into the society of amiable and happy beings, all united in the most perfect peace and friendship, all breathing nothing but love to God, and to each other; with them to dwell in scenes more delightful than the richest imagination can paint; free from every pain and care, and from all possibility of change or satiety: but, above all, to enjoy the more immediate presence of God himself; to be able to comprehend and admire his adorable perfections in a high degree, though still far short of their infinity; to be conscious of his love and favour, and to rejoice in the light of his countenance! but here all imagination fails: we can form no idea of that bliss which may be communicated to us by such a near approach to the source of all beauty and all good: we must content ourselves with believing that it is what *mortal eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.* The crown of all our joys will be to know that we are secure of possessing them *for ever.* What a transporting idea!

My dearest child! can you reflect on all these things, and not feel the most earnest longings after

immortality? Do not all other views and desires seem mean and trifling, when compared with this? And does not your inmost heart resolve that this shall be the chief and constant object of its wishes and pursuit, through the whole course of your life? If you are not insensible to that desire of happiness, which seems woven into our nature, you cannot surely be unmoved by the prospect of such a transcendent degree of it; and that, continued to all eternity—perhaps continually increasing. You cannot but dread the forfeiture of such an inheritance as the most insupportable evil? Remember then—remember the conditions on which alone it can be obtained. God will not give to vice, to carelessness, or sloth, the prize he has proposed to virtue. You have every help that can animate your endeavours: you have written laws to direct you; the example of Christ and his disciples to encourage you; the most awakening motives to engage you; and, you have besides, the comfortable promise of constant assistance from the Holy Spirit, if you diligently and sincerely pray for it. O, my dear child! let not all this mercy be lost upon you; but give your attention to this your only important concern, and accept, with profound gratitude, the inestimable advantages that are thus affectionately offered you.

Though the four gospels are each of them a narration of the [illegible] death of Christ;

yet, as they are not exactly alike, but some circumstances and sayings, omitted in one, are recorded in another, you must make yourself perfectly mistress of them all.

THE ACTS of the holy apostles, endowed with the Holy Ghost, and authorized by their divine Master, come next in order to be read. Nothing can be more interesting and edifying, than the history of their actions; of the piety, zeal, and courage, with which they preached the glad tidings of salvation; and of the various exertions of the wonderful powers conferred on them by the Holy Spirit, for the confirmation of their mission.

The character of St. Paul, and his miraculous conversion, demand your particular attention: most of the Apostles were men of low birth and education; but St. Paul was a Roman citizen; that is, he possessed the privileges annexed to the freedom of the city of Rome, which was considered as an high distinction in those countries, that had been conquered by the Romans. He was educated amongst the most learned sect of the Jews, and by one of their principal doctors. He was a man of extraordinary eloquence, as appears not only in his writings, but in several speeches in his own defence, pronounced before governors and courts of justice, when he was called to account for the doctrines he taught. He

seems to have been of an uncommonly warm temper, and zealous in whatever religion he professed: this zeal, before his conversion, shewing itself in the most unjustifiable actions, by furiously persecuting the innocent Christians: but, though his actions were bad, we may be sure his intentions were good; otherwise we should not have seen a miracle employed to convince him of his mistake, and to bring him into the right way. This example may assure us of the mercy of God towards mistaken consciences, and ought to inspire us with the most enlarged charity and good will towards those, whose erroneous principles mislead their conduct: instead of resentment and hatred against their persons, we ought only to feel an active wish of assisting them to find the truth, since we know not whether, if convinced, they might not prove, like St. Paul, chosen vessels to promote the honour of God, and of true religion. It is not my intention now to enter with you into any of the arguments for the truth of Christianity, otherwise it would be impossible wholly to pass over that which arises from this remarkable conversion, and which has been so admirably illustrated by a noble writer*, whose tract on this subject is in every body's hand.

Next follow the EPISTLES, which make a very important part of the New Testament; and you

* Lord Lyttelton.

cannot be too much employed in reading them. They contain the most excellent precepts and admonitions, and are of particular use in explaining more at large several doctrines of Christianity, which we could not so fully comprehend without them. There are indeed in the Epistles of St. Paul many passages hard to be understood: such, in particular, are the first eleven chapters to the Romans: the greater part of his Epistles to the Corinthians and Galatians: and several chapters of that to the Hebrews. Instead of perplexing yourself with these more obscure passages of scripture, I would wish you to employ your attention chiefly on those that are plain; and to judge of the doctrines taught in the other parts, by comparing them with what you find in these. It is through the neglect of this rule, that many have been led to draw the most absurd doctrines from the holy scriptures. Let me particularly recommend to your careful perusal the 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. In the 14th chapter, St. Paul has in view the difference between the Jewish and Gentile (or Heathen) converts at that time; the former were disposed to look with horror on the latter, for their impiety in not paying the same regard to the distinctions of days and meats, that they did; and the latter, on the contrary, were inclined to look with contempt on the former, for their

weakness and superstition. Excellent is the advice which the Apostle gives to both parties: he exhorts the Jewish converts not to judge, and the Gentiles not to despise; remembering that the kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost: Endeavour to conform yourself to this advice; to acquire a temper of universal candour and benevolence: and learn neither to despise nor condemn any persons on account of their particular modes of faith and worship; remembering always, that goodness is confined to no party; that there are wise and worthy men among all the sects of Christians; and that, to his own master, every one must stand or fall.

I will enter no farther into the several points discussed by St. Paul in his various epistles; most of them too intricate for your understanding at present, and many of them beyond my abilities to state clearly. I will only again recommend to you, to read those passages frequently, which, with so much fervour and energy, excite you to the practice of the most exalted piety and benevolence. If the effusions of a heart, warmed with the tenderest affection for the whole human race; if precept, warning, encouragement, example, urged by an eloquence, which such affection only could inspire, are capable of influencing your mind; you cannot fail to find, in such parts of his

epistles as are adapted to your understanding, the strongest persuasives to every virtue that can adorn and improve your nature.

The Epistle of St. James is entirely practical, and exceedingly fine; you cannot study it too much. It seems particularly designed to guard Christians against misunderstanding some things in St. Paul's writings, which have been fatally perverted to the encouragement of a dependance on faith alone, without good works. But, the more rational commentators will tell you, that by the works of the law, which the apostle asserts to be incapable of justifying us, he means, not the works of moral righteousness, but the ceremonial works of the Mosaic law; on which the Jews laid the greatest stress, as necessary to salvation. But, St. James tells us, that "if any man among us seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, that man's religion is vain." And that, "pure religion, and undefiled before God and the father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widow in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Faith in Christ, if it produce not these effects, he declares is dead, or of no power.

The Epistles of St. Peter are also full of the best instructions and admonitions, concerning the relative duties of life, amongst which are set forth the duties of women in general, and of wives in

particular. Some part of his second Epistle is prophetical; warning the church of false teachers, and false doctrines, which should undermine morality, and disgrace the cause of Christianity.

The first of St. John is written in a highly figurative style, which makes it in some parts hard to be understood: but the spirit of divine love, which it so fervently expresses, renders it highly edifying and delightful. That love of God and of man, which this beloved apostle so pathetically recommends, is in truth the essence of religion, as our Saviour himself informs us.

The book of REVELATIONS contains a prophetical account of most of the great events relating to the Christian church, which were to happen from the time of the writer, St. John, to the end of the world. Many learned men have taken a great deal of pains to explain it; and they have done this in many instances very successfully: but, I think, it is yet too soon for you to study this part of scripture: some years hence perhaps there may be no objection to your attempting it, and taking into your hands the best expositions to assist you in reading such of the most difficult parts of the New Testament as you cannot now be supposed to understand. May heaven direct you in studying this sacred volume, and render it the means of making you wise unto salvation! May you love and [illegible]t deserves, this

blessed and invaluable book, which contains the best rule of life, the clearest declaration of the will and laws of the Deity, the reviving assurance of favour to true penitents, and the unspeakably joyful tidings of eternal life and happiness to all the truly virtuous, through Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Deliverer of the world. Adieu.

LETTER IV.

ON THE REGULATION OF THE HEART AND AFFECTIONS.

You will have read the New Testament to very little purpose, my dearest Niece, if you do not perceive the great end and intention of all its precepts to be the improvement and regulation of the heart: not the outward actions alone, but the inward affections, which give birth to them, are the subjects of those precepts; as appears in our Saviour's explanation * of the commandments delivered to Moses; and in a thousand other passages of the gospels, which it is needless to recite. There are no virtues more insisted on, as necessary to our future happiness, than humility, and sincerity, or uprightness of heart; yet, none more difficult and rare. Pride and vanity, the vices opposite to humility, are the sources of almost all the worst faults, both of men and women. The latter are particularly accused, and not without reason, of

* Matth. v.

vanity, the vice of *little* minds, chiefly conversant with trifling subjects. Pride and vanity have been supposed to differ so essentially, as hardly ever to be found in the same person. "Too proud to be vain," is no uncommon expression, by which, I suppose, is meant, too proud to be over anxious for the admiration of others: but this seems to be founded on mistake. Pride is, I think, an high opinion of one's self, and an affected contempt of others: I say *affected*, for that it is not a *real* contempt is evident from this, that the lowest object of it is important enough to torture the proud man's heart, only by refusing him the homage and admiration he requires. Thus Haman could relish none of the advantages on which he valued himself, whilst that Mordecai, whom he pretended to despise, sat still in the king's gate, and would not bow to him as he passed. But, as the proud man's contempt of others is only assumed with a view to awe them into reverence by his pretended superiority, so it does not preclude an extreme inward anxiety about their opinions, and a slavish dependence on them for all his gratifications: pride, though a distinct passion, is seldom unaccompanied by vanity, which is an extravagant desire of admiration. Indeed, I never saw an insolent person, in whom a discerning eye might not discover a very large share of vanity, and of envy, its usual companion. One may [illegible]s see many *vain*

persons who are not *proud:* though they desire to be admired, they do not always admire themselves; but as timid minds are apt to despair of those things they earnestly wish for, so you will often see the woman who is most anxious to be thought handsome, most inclined to be dissatisfied with her looks, and to think all the assistance of art too little to attain the end desired. To this cause, I believe, we may generally attribute affectation; which seems to imply a mean opinion of one's own real form, or character, while we strive against nature to alter ourselves by ridiculous contortions of body, or by feigned sentiments and unnatural manners. There is no art so mean, which this mean passion will not descend to for its gratification; no creature so insignificant, whose incense it will not gladly receive. Far from despising others, the vain man will court them with the most assiduous adulation; in hopes, by feeding their vanity, to induce them to supply the craving wants of his own. He will put on the guise of benevolence, tenderness, and friendship, where he feels not the least degree of kindness, in order to prevail on good nature and gratitude, to like and to commend him: but if, in any particular case, he fancies, that airs of insolence and contempt may succeed better, he makes no scruple to assume them; though so awkwardly, that he still appears to depend on the breath of the per-

son, he would be thought to despise. Weak and timid natures seldom venture to try this last method; and, when they do, it is without the assurance necessary to carry it on with success; but, a bold and confident mind will oftener endeavour to command and extort admiration than to court it. As women are more fearful than men, perhaps this may be one reason why they are more vain than proud; whilst the other sex are oftener proud than vain. It is, I suppose, from some opinion of a certain greatness of mind accompanying the one vice rather than the other, that many will readily confess their pride, nay and even be proud of their pride, whilst every creature is ashamed of being convicted of vanity. You see, however, that the end of both is the same, though pursued by different means; or, if it differs, it is in the importance of the subject. Whilst men are proud of power, of wealth, dignity, learning, or abilities, young women are usually ambitious of nothing more than to be admired for their persons, their dress, or their most trivial accomplishments. The homage of men is their grand object; but, they only desire them to be in love with their persons, careless how despicable their minds appear, even to these their pretended adorers. I have known a woman so vain as to boast of the most disgraceful addresses; being contented to be thought meanly of, in points the

most interesting to her honour, for the sake of having it known, that her person was attractive enough to make a man transgress the bounds of respect due to her character, which was not a vicious one, if you except this intemperate vanity. But, this passion too often leads to the most ruinous actions, always corrupts the heart, and, when indulged, renders it, perhaps, as displeasing in the sight of the Almighty, as those faults which find least mercy from the world; yet alas! it is a passion so prevailing, I had almost said universal, in our sex, that it requires all the efforts of reason, and all the assistance of grace, totally to subdue it. Religion is indeed the only effectual remedy for this evil. If our hearts are not dedicated to God, they will in some way or other be dedicated to the world, both in youth and age. If our actions are not constantly referred to him, if his approbation and favour are not our principal object, we shall certainly take up with the applause of men, and make that the ruling motive of our conduct. How melancholy is it to see this phantom so eagerly followed through life! whilst all that is truly valuable to us is looked upon with indifference; or, at best, made subordinate to this darling pursuit!

Equally vain and absurd is every scheme of life that is not subservient to, and does not terminate in that great end of our being; the attain-

must be your portion; unless the avenues of the heart are guarded by a sincere abhorrence of every thing that approaches towards evil. Would you be of the number of those blessed, "who are pure in heart," you must hate and avoid every thing, both in books and in conversation, that conveys impure ideas, however neatly clothed in decent language, or recommended to your taste by pretended refinements and tender sentiments; by elegance of style, or force of wit and genius.

I must not now begin to give you my thoughts on the regulation of the affections, as that is a subject of too much consequence to be soon dismissed. I shall dedicate to it my next letter: in the mean time, believe me,

Your ever affectionate.

LETTER V.

ON THE REGULATION OF THE HEART AND AFFECTIONS. CONTINUED.

THE attachments of the heart, on which almost all the happiness or misery of life depends, are most interesting objects of our consideration. I shall give my dear niece the observations which experience has enabled me to draw from real life, and not from what others have said or written, however great their authority.

The first attachment of young hearts is *friendship*—the noblest and happiest of affections, when real and built on a solid foundation; but oftener pernicious than useful to very young people, because the connexion itself is ill understood, and the subjects of it frequently ill chosen. Their first error is that of supposing equality of age, and exact similarity of disposition, indispensably requisite in friends; whereas, these are circumstances which in great measure disqualify them for assisting each other in moral improvements, or supplying each other's defects; they expose them to the same dangers, and incline them to encourage rather than correct each other's failings.

The grand cement of this kind of friendship is telling secrets, which they call confidence; and I *verily* believe that the desire of having secrets to tell, has often helped to draw silly girls into very *un*happy adventures. If they have no lover or amour to talk of, the too frequent subject of their confidence is betraying the secrets of their families; or conjuring up fancied hardships to complain of against their parents or relations: this odious cabal they call friendship, and fancy themselves dignified by the profession; but nothing is more different from the reality, as is seen by observing how generally those early friendships

drop off, as the parties advance in years and understanding.

Do not you, my dear, be too ready to profess a friendship with any of your young companions. Love them, and be always ready to serve and oblige them, and to promote all their innocent gratifications: but be very careful how you enter into confidences with girls of your own age. Rather choose some person of riper years and judgment, whose good-nature and worthy principles may assure you of her readiness to do you service, and of her candour and condescension towards you.

I do not expect that youth should delight to associate with age, or should lay open its feelings and inclinations to such as have almost forgot what they were, or how to make proper allowance for them; but if you are fortunate enough to meet with a young woman eight or ten years older than yourself, of good sense and good principles, to whom you can make yourself agreeable, it may be one of the happiest circumstances of your life. She will be able to advise and to improve you; and, your desire of this assistance will recommend you to her taste, as much as her superior abilities will recommend her to you. Such a connection will afford you more pleasure, as well as more profit, than you can expect from a girl like yourself, equally unprovided with

knowledge, prudence, or any of those qualifications, which are necessary to make society delightful.

With a friend, such as I have described, of twenty-three or twenty-four years of age, you can hardly pass an hour without finding yourself *brought* forwarder in some useful knowledge; without learning something of the world, or of your own nature, some rule of behaviour, or some necessary caution in the conduct of life: for, even in the gayest conversations, such useful hints may often be gathered from those, whose knowledge and experience are much beyond our own. Whenever you find yourself in real want of advice, or seek the relief of unburdening your heart, such a *friend* will be able to judge of the feelings you describe, or of the circumstances you are in: perhaps from her own experience; or at least, from the knowledge she will have gained of human nature; she will be able to point out your dangers, and to guide you into the right path; or, if she finds herself incapable, she will have the prudence to direct you to some abler adviser. The age I have mentioned will not prevent her joining in your pleasures, nor will it make her a dull or grave companion; on the contrary, she will have more materials for entertaining conversation, and her liveliness will shew itself more agreeably than in one of your own age. Yours therefore will be the

advantage in such a connexion; yet, do not despair of being admitted into it, if you have an amiable and docile disposition. Ingenuous youth has many charms for a benevolent mind; and, as nothing is more endearing than the exercise of benevolence, the hope of being useful and beneficial to you will make her fond of your company.

I have known some of the sweetest and most delightful connexions between persons of different ages, in which the elder has received the highest gratification from the affection and docility of the younger; whilst the latter has gained the noblest advantages from the conversation and counsels of her wiser friend. Nor has the attachment been without use as well as pleasure to the elder party. She has found that there is no better way of improving one's own attainments than by imparting them to another; and the desire of doing this in the most acceptable way has added a sweetness and gentleness to her manner, and taught her the arts of insinuating instruction, and of winning the heart, whilst she convinces the understanding.

I hope, my dear, you in your turn will be this useful and engaging friend to your younger companions, particularly to your sister and brothers, who ought ever, unless they should prove unworthy, to be your nearest and dearest friends, whose interest and welfare you are bound to desire as much as your own. If you are wanting here, do

not fancy yourself qualified for friendship with others, but be assured, your heart is too narrow and selfish for so generous an affection.

Remember that the end of true friendship is the good of its object, and the cultivation of virtue, in two hearts emulous of each other, and desirous to perpetuate their society beyond the grave. Nothing can be more contrary to this end than that mutual intercourse of flattery, which some call friendship. A real friend will venture to displease me, rather than indulge my faulty inclinations, or increase my natural frailties; she will endeavour to make me acquainted with myself, and will put me upon guarding the weak parts of my character.

Friendship, in the highest sense of the word, can only subsist between persons of strict integrity, and true generosity. Before you fancy yourself possessed of such a treasure, you should examine the value of your own heart, and see how well it is qualified for so sacred a connexion: and then, a harder task remains, to find out whether the object of your affection is also endued with the same virtuous disposition. Youth and inexperience are ill able to penetrate into characters: the least appearance of good attracts their admiration, and they immediately suppose they have found the object they pursued.

It is a melancholy consideration that the judgment can only be formed by experience, which generally comes too late for our own use, and is seldom accepted for that of others. I fear it is in vain for me to tell you what dangerous mistakes I made in the early choice of friends; how incapable I then was of finding out such as were fit for me, and how little I was acquainted with the true nature of friendship, when I thought myself most fervently engaged in it! I am sensible all this will hardly persuade you to choose by the eyes of others, or even to suspect that your own may be deceived. Yet, if you should give any weight to my observations, it may not be quite useless to mention to you some of the essential requisites in a friend; and to exhort you never to choose one in whom they are wanting.

The first of these is a deep and sincere regard for religion. If your friend draws her principles from the same source with yourself, if the gospel precepts are the rule of her life, as well as of yours, you will always know what to expect from her, and have one common standard of right and wrong to refer to, by which to regulate all material points of conduct. The woman who thinks lightly of sacred things, or who is ever heard to speak of them with levity or indifference, cannot reasonably be expected to pay a more serious regard to the laws of friendship, or to be uniformly punctual in

the performance of any of the duties of society: take no such person to your bosom, however recommended by good humour, wit, or any other qualification; nor let gaiety or thoughtlessness be deemed an excuse for offending in this important point: a person, habituated to the love and reverence of religion and virtue, no more wants the guard of serious consideration to restrain her from speaking disrespectfully of them than to prevent her speaking ill of her dearest friend. In the liveliest hour of mirth, the innocent heart can dictate nothing but what is innocent: it will immediately take alarm at the apprehension of doing wrong, and stop at once in the full career of youthful sprightliness, if reminded of the neglect or transgression of any duty. Watch for these symptoms of innocence and goodness, and admit no one to your entire affection, who would ever persuade you to make light of any sort of offence, or who can treat, with levity or contempt, any person or thing that bears a relation to religion.

A due regard to reputation is the next indispensable qualification. "Have regard to thy name," saith the wise son of Sirach, "for that will continue with thee above a thousand great treasures of gold." The young person who is careless of blame, and indifferent to the esteem of the wise and prudent part of the world, is not only a most dangerous companion, but gives a certain pr

the want of rectitude in her own mind. Discretion is the guardian of all the virtues; and, when she forsakes them, they cannot long resist the attacks of an enemy. There is a profligacy of spirit in defying the rules of decorum, and despising censure, which seldom ends otherwise than in extreme corruption and utter ruin. Modesty and prudence are qualities that early display themselves and are easily discerned: Where these do not appear, you should avoid, not only friendship, but every step towards intimacy, lest your own character should suffer with that of your companion; but, where they shine forth in any eminent degree, you may safely cultivate an acquaintance, in the reasonable hope of finding the solid fruits of virtue beneath such sweet and promising blossoms: should you be disappointed, you will at least have run no risque in the search after them, and may cherish as a creditable acquaintance the person so adorned, though she may not deserve a place in your inmost heart.

The understanding must next be examined: and this is a point which requires so much understanding to judge of in another, that I must earnestly recommend to you, not to rely entirely on your own, but to take the opinion of your older friends. I do not wish you to seek for bright and uncommon talents, though these are sources of [illegible] delight and improvement, when

found in company with solid judgment and sound principles. Good sense (by which I mean a capacity for reasoning justly and discerning truly) applied to the uses of life, and exercised in distinguishing characters and directing conduct, is alone *necessary* to an intimate connection; but, without this, the best intentions, though certain of reward hereafter, may fail of producing their effects in this life; nor can they singly constitute the character of an useful and valuable friend. On the other hand, the most dazzling genius, or the most engaging wit and humour, can but ill answer the purposes of friendship, without plain common sense and a faculty of just reasoning.

What can one do with those who will not be answered with reason; and who, when you are endeavouring to convince or persuade them by serious argument, will parry the blow with a witty repartee or a stroke of poignant raillery? I know not whether such a reply is less provoking than that of an obstinate fool, who answers your strongest reasons with "What you say may be very true, but this is my way of thinking." A small acquaintance with the world will shew you instances of the most absurd and foolish conduct, in persons of brilliant parts and entertaining faculties. But, how trifling is the talent of diverting an idle hour, compared with true wisdom and prudence, which are perpetually wanted to direct

us safely and happily through life, and to make us useful and valuable to others!

Fancy, I know, will have her share, in friendship, as well as in love; you must please, as well as serve me, before I can love you as the friend of my heart. But the faculties that please for an evening may not please for life. The humourous man soon runs through his stock of odd stories, mimickry and jest; and the wit, by constantly repeated flashes, confounds and tires one's intellect, instead of enlivening it with agreeable surprise: but, good sense can neither tire nor wear out; it improves by exercise, and increases in value, the more it is known: the pleasure it gives in conversation is lasting and satisfactory, because it is accompanied with improvement; its worth is proportioned to the occasion that calls for it, and rises highest on the most interesting topics; the heart, as well as the understanding, finds its account in it; and our noblest interests are promoted by the entertainment we receive from such a companion.

A good temper is the next qualification, the value of which, in a friend, you will want no arguments to prove, when you are truly convinced of the necessity of it in yourself, which I shall endeavour to shew you in a following letter. But, as this is a quality in which you may be deceived, without a long and intimate acquaintance, you

must not be hasty in forming connexions, before you have had sufficient opportunity for making observations on this head. A young person, when pleased and enlivened by the presence of her youthful companions, seldom shews ill temper; which must be extreme indeed, if it is not at least controllable in such situations. But, you must watch her behaviour to her own family, and the degree of estimation she stands in with them. Observe her manner to servants and inferiors, to children, and even to animals. See in what manner she bears disappointments, contradiction, and restraint; and what degree of vexation she expresses on any accident of loss or trouble. If in such little trials she shews a meek, resigned, and cheerful temper, she will probably preserve it on greater occasions; but if she is impatient and discontented under these, how will she support the far greater evils which may await her in her progress through life? If you should have an opportunity of seeing her in sickness, observe whether her complaints are of a mild and gentle kind, forced from her by pain, and restrained as much as possible; or whether they are expressions of a turbulent, rebellious mind, that hardly submits to the divine hand. See whether she is tractable, considerate, kind, and grateful to those about her; or whether she takes the opportunity, which their compassion gives her, to tyrannize over, and

torment them. Women are in general very liable to ill health, which must necessarily make them in some measure troublesome and disagreeable to those they live with. They should therefore take the more pains to lighten the burden as much as possible, by patience and good humour; and be careful not to let their infirmities break in, on the health, freedom, or enjoyments of others, more than is needful and just. Some ladies seem to think it very improper for any person within their reach, to enjoy a moment's comfort while they are in pain; and make no scruple of sacrificing to their own least convenience, whenever they are indisposed, the proper rest, meals, or refreshments of their servants, and even sometimes of their husbands and children. But, their selfishness defeats its own purpose, as it weakens that affection and tender pity which excites the most assiduous services, and affords the most healing balm to the heart of the sufferer.

I have already expressed my wishes that your chosen friend may be some years older than yourself; but this is an advantage not always to be obtained. Whatever be her age, *religion, discretion, good sense,* and *good temper,* must on no account be dispensed with; and, till you can find one so qualified, you had better make no closer connection than that of a mutual intercourse of civilities and good offices. But. if it is always

your aim to mix with the best company, and to be worthy of such society, you will probably meet with some one among them deserving your affection, to whom you may be equally agreeable.

When I speak of the best company, I do not mean in the common acceptation of the word—persons of high rank and fortune; but rather the most worthy and sensible. It is, however, very important to a young woman to be introduced into life on a respectable footing, and to converse with those, whose manners and style of life may polish her behaviour, refine her sentiments, and give her consequence in the eye of the world. Your equals in rank are most proper for intimacy, but, to be sometimes amongst your superiors is every way desirable and advantageous, unless it should inspire you with pride, or with the foolish desire of emulating their grandeur and expense.

Above all things avoid intimacy with those of low birth and education; nor think it a mark of humility to delight in such society; for it much oftener proceeds from the meanest kind of pride, that of being the head of the company, and seeing your companions subservient to you. The servile flattery and submission, which usually recommend such people, and make amends for their ignorance and want of conversation, will infallibly corrupt your heart, and make all company insipid from whom you cannot expect the same homage.

Your manners and faculties, instead of improving, must be continually lowered to suit you to your companions; and, believe me, you will find it no easy matter to raise them again to a level with those of polite and well-informed people.

The greatest kindness and civility to inferiors is perfectly consistent with proper caution on this head. Treat them always with affability, and talk to them of their own affairs, with an affectionate interest; but never make them familiar, or admit them as associates in your diversions: but, above all, never trust them with your secrets, which is putting yourself entirely in their power, and subjecting yourself to the most shameful slavery. The only reason for making choice of such confidants must be the certainty that they will not venture to blame or contradict inclinations, which you are conscious no true friend would encourage. But this is a meanness into which I trust you are in no danger of falling. I rather hope you will have the laudable ambition of spending your time chiefly with those whose superior talents, education, and politeness, may continually improve you, and whose society will do you honour. However, let no advantage of this kind weigh against the want of principle. I have long ago resolved with David, that, as far as lies in my power, "I will not know a wicked person." Nothing can compensate for the contagion of bad example, and for

the danger of wearing off by use that abhorrence of evil actions and sentiments which every innocent mind sets out with, but which an indiscriminate acquaintance in the world soon abates, and at length destroys.

If you are good, and seek friendship only amongst the good, I trust you will be happy enough to find it. The wise son of Sirach pronounces that you will! *"A faithful friend," saith he, "is the medicine of life; and he that feareth the Lord shall find him. Whoso feareth the Lord shall direct his friendship aright; for as he is, so shall his neighbour be also." In the same admirable book, you will find directions how to choose and to preserve a friend. Indeed there is hardly a circumstance in life, concerning which you may not there meet with the best advice imaginable. Caution in making friendships is particularly recommended. †"Be in peace with many, nevertheless have but one counsellor of a thousand. If thou wouldst get a friend, prove him first, and be not hasty to credit him; for some man is a friend for his own occasion; and will not abide in the day of trouble. And there is a friend, who being turned to enmity and strife, will discover thy reproach." Again, "Some friend is a companion at the table, and will not continue in the day of thy affliction; but in thy

* Ecclus. v. † Ecclus. vi.

prosperity he will be as thyself, and will be bold over thy servants: if thou be brought low, he will be against thee, and will hide himself from thy face." Chap. ix. 10. "Forsake not an old friend; for the new is not comparable to him. A new friend is as new wine; when it is old thou shalt drink it with pleasure."

When you have discreetly chosen, the next point is how to preserve your friend. Numbers complain of the fickleness and ingratitude of those on whom they bestowed their affection; but few examine, whether what they complain of *is* not owing to themselves. Affection is not like a portion of freehold land, which when once settled upon you is a possession for ever, without further trouble on your part. If you grow less deserving, or less attentive to please, you must expect to see the effects of your remissness, in the gradual decline of your friend's esteem and attachment. Resentment and reproaches will not recall what you have lost: but, on the contrary, will hasten the dissolution of every remaining tie. The best remedy is to renew your care and assiduity to deserve and cultivate affection, without seeming to have perceived its abatement. Jealousy and distrust are the bane of friendship, whose essence is esteem and affiance. But if jealousy is expressed by unkind upbraidings, or, what is worse, by cold, haughty looks, and inso-

lent contempt, it can hardly fail, if often repeated, to realize the misfortune, which at first perhaps was imaginary. Nothing can be more an antidote to affection than such behaviour, or than the cause of it, which, in reality, is nothing but pride; though the jealous person would fain attribute it to uncommon tenderness and delicacy: But tenderness is never so exprest; it is indeed deeply sensible of unkindness, but it cannot be unkind; it may subsist with anger, but not with contempt; it may be weakened, or even killed, by ingratitude; but it cannot be changed into hatred. Remember always, that if you would be *loved*, you must be *amiable*. Habit may indeed, for a time, supply the deficiency of merit: what we have long loved, we do not easily cease to love; but habit will at length be conquered by frequent disgusts. *"Whoso casteth a stone at the birds, frayeth them away; and he that upbraideth his friend, breaketh friendship. Though thou drewest a sword at thy friend, yet despair not, for there may be a returning to favour. If thou hast opened thy mouth against thy friend, fear not, for there may be a reconciliation; except for *upbraiding, or pride, or disclosing of secrets*, or a *treacherous wound*, for, for these things every friend will depart."

I have hitherto spoken of a friend in the singular number, rather in compliance with the notions

* Eccles. xxii. 20.

of most writers, who have treated of friendship, and who generally suppose it can have but one object, than from my own ideas. The highest kind of friendship is indeed confined to one, I mean, the conjugal, which, in its perfection, is so entire and absolute an union, of interest, will, and affection, as no other connection can stand in competition with. But, there are various degrees of friendship, which can admit of several objects, esteemed, and delighted in, for different qualities; and whose separate rights are perfectly compatible. Perhaps it is not possible to love two persons exactly in the same degree; yet the difference may be so small, that none of the parties can be certain on which side the scale preponderates.

It is a narrowness of mind to wish to confine your friend's affection solely to yourself; since you are conscious that, however perfect your attachment may be, you cannot possibly supply to her all the blessings she may derive from several friends, who may each love her as well as you do, and may each contribute largely to her happiness. If she depends on you alone for all the comforts and advantages of friendship, your absence or death may leave her desolate and forlorn. If therefore you prefer her good to your own selfish gratification, you should rather strive to multiply her friends, and be ready to embrace

in your affections all who love her, and deserve her love: this generosity will bring its own reward, by multiplying the sources of your pleasures and supports; and your first friend will love you the more for such an endearing proof of the extent of your affection, which can stretch to receive all who are dear to her. But if, on the contrary, every mark of esteem shewn to another excites uneasiness or resentment in you, the person you love must soon feel her connection with you a burden and restraint. She can own no obligation to so selfish an attachment; nor can her tenderness be increased by that which lessens her esteem. If she is really fickle and ungrateful, she is not worth your reproaches: if not, she must be reasonably offended by such injurious imputations.

You do not want to be told, that the strictest fidelity is required in friendship: and though possibly instances might be brought, in which even the secret of a friend must be sacrificed to the calls of justice and duty, yet these are rare and doubtful cases, and we may venture to pronounce that *"Whoso discovereth secrets, loseth his credit, and shall never find a friend to his mind." "Love thy friend, and be faithful unto him: but, if thou bewrayest his secrets, follow no more after him. For, as a man that hath de-

* Eccles. xxvii. 16.

stroyed his enemy, so hast thou destroyed the love of thy friend. As one that letteth a bird go out of his hand, so hast thou let thy neighbour go. Follow no more after him, for he is too far off; he is as a roe escaped out of the snare. As for a wound, it may be bound up; and after revilings there may be reconcilement: but he that bewrayeth secrets, is without hope."

But in order to reconcile this inviolable fidelity with the duty you owe to yourself or others, you must carefully guard against being made the repositary of such secrets as are not fit to be kept. If your friend should engage in any unlawful pursuit; if, for instance, she should intend to carry on an affair of love, unknown to her parents, you must first use your utmost endeavours to dissuade her from it; and, if she persists, positively and solemnly declare against being a confidant in such a case. Suffer her not to speak to you on the subject, and warn her to forbear acquainting you with any step she may propose to take towards a marriage unsanctified by parental approbation. Tell her, you would think it your duty to apprize her parents of the danger, into which she was throwing herself. However unkindly she may take this at the time, she will certainly esteem and love you the more for it, whenever she recovers a sense of her duty, or experiences the sad effects of swerving from it.

There is another case, which I should not choose to suppose possible, in addressing myself to so young a person, was it not that too many instances of it have of late been exposed to public animadversion: I mean the case of a married woman, who encourages or tolerates the addresses of a lover. May no such person be ever called a friend of yours! but, if ever one whom, when innocent, you had loved, should fall into so fatal an error, I can only say, that, after proper remonstrances, you must immediately withdraw from all intimacy and confidence with her. Nor let the absurd pretence of *innocent intentions*, in such circumstances, prevail with you to lend your countenance, a moment, to disgraceful conduct. There cannot be innocence, in any degree of indulgence to unlawful passion. The sacred obligations to marriage are very ill understood by the wife, who can think herself innocent, while she parlies with a lover, or with love; and who does not shut her heart and ears against the most distant approaches of either. A virtuous wife, though she should be so unhappy as not to be secured by having her strongest affections fixed on her husband, will never admit an idea of any other man, in the light of a lover: but, if such an idea should unawares intrude into her mind, she would instantly stifle it, before it grew strong enough to give her much uneasiness. Not to the most intimate friend, hardly to her

own soul, would she venture to confess a weakness, she would so sincerely abhor. Whenever therefore such infidelity of heart is made a subject of confidence, depend upon it the corruption has spread far, and has been faultily indulged. Enter not into her counsels: shew her the danger she is in, and then, withdraw yourself from it, whilst you are yet unsullied by contagion.

It has been supposed a duty of friendship to lay open every thought and every feeling of the heart to our friend. But I have just mentioned a case, in which this is not only unnecessary, but wrong. A disgraceful inclination, which we resolve to conquer, should be concealed from every body; and is more easily subdued when denied the indulgence of talking of its object: and, I think, there may be other instances, in which it would be most prudent to keep our thoughts concealed even from our dearest friend. Some things I would communicate to one friend, and not to another, whom perhaps I loved better, because I might know that my first friend was not so well qualified as the other to counsel me on that particular subject: a natural bias on her mind, some prevailing opinion, or some connection with persons concerned, might make her an improper confident with regard to one particular, though qualified to be so on all other occasions.

The confidence of friendship is indeed one of its sweetest pleasures and greatest advantages. The human heart often stands in need of some kind and faithful partner of its cares, in whom it may repose all its weaknesses, and with whom it is sure of finding the tenderest sympathy. Far be it from me to shut up the heart with cold distrust, and rigid caution, or to adopt the odious maxim, that "we should live with a friend as if he were one day to become an enemy." But we must not wholly abandon prudence in any sort of connection; since when every guard is laid aside, our unbounded openness may injure others as well as ourselves. Secrets entrusted to us must be sacredly kept even from our nearest friend; for we have no right to dispose of the secrets of others.

If there is danger in making an improper choice of friends, my dear child, how much more fatal would it be to mistake in a stronger kind of attachment, in that which leads to an irrevocable engagement for life! yet so much more is the understanding blinded, when once the fancy is captivated, that, it seems a desperate undertaking, to convince a girl in love that she has mistaken the character of the man she prefers.

If the passions would wait for the decision of judgment, and, if a young woman could [illegible] same opportunities of examining

character of her lover, as into that of a female candidate for her friendship, the same rules might direct you in the choice of both; for, marriage being the highest state of friendship, the qualities requisite in a friend are still more important in a husband. But young women know so little of the world, especially of the other sex, and such pains are usually taken to deceive them, that they are every way unqualified to choose for themselves, upon their own judgment. Many a heartach shall I feel for you, my sweet girl, if I live a few years longer! Since, not only all your happiness in this world, but your advancement in religion and virtue, or your apostacy from every good principle you have been taught, will probably depend on the companion you fix to for life. Happy will it be for you, if you are wise and modest enough to withdraw from temptation, and preserve your heart free and open to receive the just recommendation of your parents: farther than a recommendation, I dare say, they will never go, in an affair, which, though it should be begun by them, ought never to be proceeded in, without your free concurrence.

Whatever romantic notions you may hear, or read of, depend upon it, those matches are the happiest which are made on rational grounds, on [illegible]bleness of character, degree, and fortune, on [illegible]esteem, and the prospect of a real and

permanent friendship. Far be it from me, to advise you to marry where you do not love; a mercenary marriage is a detestable prostitution: But, on the other hand, an union formed upon mere personal liking, without the requisite foundation of esteem, without the sanction of parental approbation, and consequently without the blessing of God, can be productive of nothing but misery and shame. The passion, to which every consideration of duty and prudence is sacrificed, instead of supplying the loss of all other advantages, will soon itself be changed into mutual distrust, repentance, reproaches, and finally perhaps into hatred. The distresses it brings will be void of every consolation: you will have disgusted the friends who should be your support; debased yourself in the eyes of the world; and, what is much worse, in your own eyes; and even in those of your husband: above all, you will have offended that God, who alone can shield you from calamity.

From an act like this, I trust, your duty and gratitude to your kind parents, the first of duties next to that we owe to God, and inseparably connected with it, will effectually preserve you. But most young people think they have fulfilled their duty, if they refrain from actually marrying against prohibition. They suffer their affections, and even perhaps their word of honour to be engaged, without consulting their parents: yet satisfy them-

selves with resolving not to marry without their consent: not considering that, besides the wretched, useless, uncomfortable state they plunge *themselves* into, when they contract a hopeless engagement, they must likewise involve a *parent* in the miserable dilemma of either giving a forced consent against his judgment, or of seeing his beloved child pine away her prime of life in fruitless anxiety, seeing her accuse him of tyranny, because he restrains her from certain ruin, seeing her affections alienated from her family, and all her thoughts engrossed by one object, to the destruction of her health and spirits, and of all her improvements and occupations. What a cruel alternative for parents, whose happiness is bound up with that of their child! The time to consult them is before you have given a lover the least encouragement; nor ought you to listen a moment to the man, who would wish you to keep his addresses secret; since he thereby shews himself conscious that they are not fit to be encouraged.

But perhaps I have said enough on this subject at present; though, if ever advice on such a topic can be of use, it must be before passion has got possession of the heart and silenced both reason and principle. Fix therefore in your mind, as deeply as possible, those rules of duty and prudence, which now seem reasonable to you, that they may be at hand in the hour of trial, and save

you from the miseries, in which strong affections, unguided by discretion, involve so many of our sex.

If you love virtue sincerely, you will be incapable of loving an openly vicious character. But, alas! your innocent heart may be easily ensnared by an artful one; and from this danger nothing can secure you but the experience of those, to whose guidance God has entrusted you: may you be wise enough to make use of it! So will you have the fairest chance of attaining the best blessings this world can afford, in a faithful and virtuous union with a worthy man, who may direct your steps in safety and honour through this life, and partake with you the rewards of virtue in that which is to come. But, if this happy lot should be denied you, do not be afraid of a single life. A worthy woman is never destitute of valuable friends, who in a great measure supply to her the want of nearer connections. She can never be slighted or disesteemed, while her good temper and benevolence render her a blessing to her companions. Nay, she must be honoured by all persons of sense and virtue, for preferring the single state to an union unworthy of her. The calamities of an unhappy marriage are so much greater than can befal a single person, that, the unmarried woman may find abundant argume to be contented with her condition, when poi

out to her by Providence. Whether married or single, if your first care is to please God, you will undoubtedly be a blessed creature; "for that which he delights in *must be happy*." How earnestly I wish you this happiness, you can never know, unless you could read the heart of

Your truly affectionate.

LETTER VI.

ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE TEMPER.

THE next great point of importance to your future happiness, my dear, is what your parents have, doubtless, been continually attentive to from your infancy, as it is impossible to undertake it too early; I mean the due Regulation of your Temper. Though you are in a great measure indebted to their forming hands for whatever is good in it, you are sensible, no doubt, as every human creature is, of propensities to some infirmity of temper, which it must now be *your own* care to correct and to subdue; otherwise the pains that have hitherto been taken with you may all become fruitless: and when you are your own mistress, you may relapse into those faults, which were originally in your nature, and which will require to be diligently watched and kept under, through the whole course of your life.

If you consider, that the constant tenor of the gospel precepts is to promote love, peace, and good-will amongst men, you will not doubt that the cultivation of an amiable disposition is a great part of your religious duty; since nothing leads more directly to the breach of charity, and to the injury and molestation of our fellow creatures, than the indulgence of an ill temper. Do not therefore think lightly of the offences you may commit, for want of a due command over it, or suppose yourself responsible for them to your fellow creatures only; but, be assured, you must give a strict account of them all to the Supreme Governor of the world, who has made this a great part of your appointed trial upon earth.

A woman, bred up in a religious manner, placed above the reach of want, and out of the way of sordid or scandalous vices, can have but few temptations to the flagrant breach of the divine laws. It particularly concerns her therefore to understand them in their full import, and to consider, how far she trespasses against them, by such actions as appear trivial, when compared with murder, adultery, and theft, but which become of very great importance, by being frequently repeated, and occurring in the daily transactions of life.

The principal virtues or vices of a woman must be of a private and domestic kind. Within the circle of her own family and dependants lies h

sphere of action; the scene of almost all those tasks and trials, which must determine her character, and her fate, here and hereafter. Reflect, for a moment, how much the happiness of her husband, children, and servants, must depend on her temper, and you will see that the greatest good or evil, which she ever may have in her power to do, may arise from her correcting or indulging its infirmities.

Though I wish the principle of duty towards God to be your ruling motive in the exercise of every virtue, yet, as human nature stands in need of all possible helps, let us not forget how essential it is to present happiness, and to the enjoyment of this life, to cultivate such a temper as is likewise indispensably requisite to the attainment of higher felicity in the life to come. The greatest outward blessings cannot afford enjoyment to a mind ruffled and uneasy within itself. A fit of ill humour will spoil the finest entertainment, and is as real a torment as the most painful disease. Another unavoidable consequence of ill temper is the dislike and aversion of all who are witnesses to it, and perhaps, the deep and lasting resentment of those, who suffer from its effects. We all, from social or self-love, earnestly desire the esteem and affection of our fellow creatures; and indeed our condition makes them so necessary to us, that the wretch, who has forfeited them, must

feel desolate and undone, deprived of all the best enjoyments and comforts the world can afford, and given up to his inward misery, unpitied and scorned. But this never can be the fate of a good natured person: whatever faults he may have, they will generally be treated with lenity; he will find an advocate in every human heart; his errors will be lamented rather than abhorred; and his virtues will be viewed in the fairest point of light: His good humour, without the help of great talents or acquirements, will make his company preferable to that of the most brilliant genius, in whom this quality is wanted: in short, it is almost impossible that you can be sincerely beloved by any body, without this engaging property, whatever other excellences you may possess; but, with it, you will scarcely fail of finding some friends and favourers, even though you should be destitute of almost every other advantage.

Perhaps you will say, "all this is very true, but our tempers are not in our own power; we are made with different dispositions, and, if mine is not amiable, it is rather my unhappiness than my fault." This, my dear, is commonly said by those who will not take the trouble to correct themselves. Yet, be assured, it is a delusion, and will not avail in our justification before him, "who knoweth whereof we are made," and of what we are capable. It is true, we are not all

equally happy in our dispositions; but human virtue consists in cherishing and cultivating every good inclination, and in checking and subduing every propensity to evil. If you had been born with a bad temper it might have been made a good one, at least with regard to its outward effects, by education, reason, and principle: and, though you are so happy as to have a good one while young, do not suppose it will always continue so, if you neglect to maintain a proper command over it. Power, sickness, disappointments, or worldly cares, may corrupt and embitter the finest disposition, if they are not counteracted by reason and religion.

It is observed, that every temper is inclined, in some degree, either to passion, peevishness, or obstinacy. Many are so unfortunate as to be inclined to each of the three in turn: it is necessary therefore to watch the bent of our nature, and to apply the remedies proper for the infirmity to which we are most liable. With regard to the first, it is so injurious to society, and so odious in itself, especially in the female character, that one would think shame alone would be sufficient to preserve a young woman from giving way to it; for it is as unbecoming her character to be betrayed into ill behaviour by *passion*, as by *intoxication*, and she ought to be ashamed of the one, as much as of the other. Gentleness, meekness,

and patience, are her peculiar distinctions, and an enraged woman is one of the most disgusting sights in nature.

It is plain, from experience, that the most passionate people can command themselves, when they have a motive sufficiently strong; such as the presence of those they fear, or to whom they particularly desire to recommend themselves: it is therefore no excuse to persons, whom you have injured by unkind reproaches, and unjust aspersions, to tell them you was in a passion: the allowing yourself to speak to them in passion is a proof of an insolent disrespect, which the meanest of your fellow creatures would have a right to resent. When once you find yourself heated so far as to desire to say what you know would be provoking and wounding to another, you should immediately resolve either to be silent, or to quit the room, than to give utterance to any thing dictated by so bad an inclination. Be assured, you are then unfit to reason or to reprove, or to hear reason from others. It is therefore your part to retire from such an occasion of sin; and wait till you are cool, before you presume to judge of what has passed. By accustoming yourself thus to conquer and disappoint your anger, you will, by degrees, find it grow weak and manageable, so as to leave your reason at liberty: You will be able to restrain your tongue from

This self-examination will at least give you time to cool, and, if you are just, will dispose you to balance your own wrong with that of your antagonist, and to settle the account with him on equal terms.

Peevishness, though not so violent and fatal in its immediate effects, is still more unamiable than passion, and, if possible, more destructive of happiness, in as much as it operates more continually. Though the fretful man injures us less, he disgusts us more than the passionate one; because he betrays a low and little mind, intent on trifles, and engrossed by a paltry self-love, which knows not how to bear the very apprehension of any inconvenience. It is self-love then, which we must combat, when we find ourselves assaulted by this infirmity; and, by voluntarily enduring inconveniences, we shall habituate ourselves to bear them with ease, and good-humour, when occasioned by others. Perhaps this is the best kind of religious mortification, as the chief end of denying ourselves any innocent indulgences must be to acquire a habit of command over our passions and inclinations, particularly such as are likely to lead us into evil. Another method of conquering this enemy is to abstract our minds from that attention to trifling circumstances, which usually creates this uneasiness. Those who are engaged in high and important pursuits are

very little affected by small inconveniences. The man whose head is full of studious thought, or whose heart is full of care, will eat his dinner without knowing whether it was well or ill dressed, or whether it was served punctually at the hour or not: and though absence from the common things of life is far from desirable, especially in a woman, yet too minute and anxious an attention to them seldom fails to produce a teazing, mean, and fretful disposition. I would therefore wish your mind to have always some objects in pursuit worthy of it, that it may not be engrossed by such as are in themselves scarce worthy a moment's anxiety. It is chiefly in the decline of life, when amusements fail, and when the more importunate passions subside, that this infirmity is observed to grow upon us; and perhaps it will seldom fail to do so, unless carefully watched and counteracted by reason. We must then endeavour to substitute some pursuits in the place of those, which can only engage us in the beginning of our course. The pursuit of glory and happiness in another life, by every means of improving and exalting our own minds, becomes more and more interesting to us, the nearer we draw to the end of all sublunary enjoyments. Reading, reflection, rational conversation, and, above all, conversing with God, by prayer and meditation, may preserve us from taking that anxious inter-

the little comforts and conveniencies of our remaining days, which usually gives birth to so much fretfulness in old people. But though the aged and infirm are most liable to this evil; and they alone are to be pitied for it; yet we sometimes see the young, the healthy, and those who enjoy most outward blessings, inexcusably guilty of it. The smallest disappointment in pleasure, or difficulty in the most trifling employment, will put wilful young people out of temper, and their very amusements frequently become sources of vexation and peevishness. How often have I seen a girl, preparing for a ball, or for some other public appearance, unable to satisfy her own vanity, fret over every ornament she put on, quarrel with her maid, with her clothes, her hair; and growing still more unlovely as she grew more cross, be ready to fight with her looking-glass for not making her as handsome as she wished to be. She did not consider that the traces of this ill-humour on her countenance would be a greater disadvantage to her appearance than any defect in her dress, or even than the plainest features enlivened by joy and good humour. There is a degree of resignation necessary even to the enjoyment of pleasure; we must be ready and willing to give up some part of what we could wish for, before we can enjoy that which is indulged to us. I have no doubt that she who frets all the while

she is dressing for an assembly, will suffer still greater uneasiness when she is there. The same craving restless vanity will there endure a thousand mortifications, which, in the midst of seeming pleasure, will secretly corrode her heart; whilst the meek and humble generally find more gratification than they expected, and return home pleased and enlivened from every scene of amusement, though they could have staid away from it with perfect ease and contentment.

Sullenness, or obstinacy, is perhaps a worse fault of temper than either of the former; and, if indulged, may end in the most fatal extremes of stubborn melancholy, malice and revenge. The resentment which, instead of being expressed, is nursed in secret, and continually aggravated by the imagination, will, in time, become the ruling passion; and then, how horrible must be his case, whose kind and pleasurable affections are all swallowed up by the tormenting as well as detestable sentiments of hatred and revenge! *"Admonish thy friend, peradventure he hath not done it: or, if he hath, that he do it no more. Admonish thy friend, peradventure he hath not said it: or, if he hath, that he speak it not again." Brood not over a resentment, which perhaps was at first ill grounded, and which is undoubtedly heightened by an heated imagination. But, when you have

* Eccles. xix. 13.

first subdued your own temper, so as to be able to speak calmly, reasonably, and kindly, then expostulate with the person you suppose to be in fault: hear what she has to say; and either reconcile yourself to her, or quiet your mind under the injury, by the principle of Christian charity. But if it should appear that you yourself have been most to blame, or if you have been in an error, acknowledge it fairly and handsomely; if you feel any reluctance to do so, be certain that it arises from pride, to conquer which is an absolute duty. "A soft answer turneth away wrath," and a generous confession oftentimes more than atones for the fault which requires it. Truth and justice demand that we should acknowledge conviction, as soon as we feel it, and not maintain an erroneous opinion, or justify a wrong conduct, merely from the false shame of confessing our past ignorance. A false shame it undoubtedly is, and as impolitic as unjust, since your error is already seen by those who endeavour to set you right; but your conviction, and the candour and generosity of owning it freely, may still be an honour to you, and would greatly recommend you to the the person with whom you disputed. With a disposition strongly inclined to sullenness or obstinacy, this must be a very painful exertion; and to make a perfect conquest over yourself at once may perhaps appear impracticable, whilst the zeal

of self-justification, and the abhorrence of blame, are strong upon you. But if you are so unhappy as to yield to your infirmity, at one time, do not let this discourage you from renewing your efforts. Your mind will gain strength from the contest, and your internal enemy will by degrees be forced to give ground. Be not afraid to revive the subject, as soon as you find yourself able to subdue your temper; and then frankly lay open the conflict you sustained at the time: by this you will make all the amends in your power for your fault, and will certainly change the disgust you had given into pity at least, if not admiration. Nothing is more endearing than such a confession; and you will find such a satisfaction in your own consciousness, and in the renewed tenderness and esteem you will gain from the person concerned, that your task for the future will be made more easy, and your reluctance to be convinced will, on every occasion, grow less and less.

The love of truth, and a real desire of improvement, ought to be the only motives of argumentation: and, where these are sincere, no difficulty can be made of embracing the truth, as soon as it is perceived. But, in fact, people oftener dispute from vanity and pride, which make it a grevious mortification to allow that we are the wiser for what we have heard from another. To receive advice, reproof, and instruction, properly

surest sign of a sincere and humble heart; and shews a greatness of mind, which commands our respect and reverence, while it appears so willingly to yield to us the superiority.

Observe, notwithstanding, that I do not wish you to hear of your faults without pain: Such an indifference would afford small hopes of amendment. Shame and remorse are the first steps to true repentance; yet we should be willing to bear this pain, and thankful to the kind hand that inflicts it for our good. Nor must we, by sullen silence under it, leave our kind physician in doubt, whether the operation has taken effect or not, or whether it has not added another malady, instead of curing the first. You must consider that those who tell you of your faults, if they do it from motives of kindness and not of malice, exert their friendship in a painful office, which must have cost them as great an effort as it can be to you to acknowledge the service; and, if you refuse this encouragement, you cannot expect that any one, who is not absolutely obliged to it by duty, will a second time undertake such an ill-requited trouble. What a loss would this be to yourself! how difficult would be our progress to that degree of perfection, which is necessary to our happiness, was it not for the assistance we receive from each other! this certa[illegible] the means of grace held out to u[illegible]udge, and, if we

reject it, we are answerable for all the miscarriages we may fall into for want of it.

I know not, whether that strange caprice, that inequality of taste and behaviour, so commonly attributed to our sex, may be properly called a fault of temper; as it seems not to be connected with, or arising from our animal frame, but to be rather the fruit of our own self-indulgence, degenerating by degrees into such a wantonness of will as knows not how to please itself. When, instead of regulating our actions by reason and principle, we suffer ourselves to be guided by every slight and momentary impulse of inclination, we shall, doubtless, appear so variable and inconstant, that nobody can guess, by our behaviour to-day, what may be expected from us to-morrow; nor can we ourselves tell whether what we delighted in, a week ago, will now afford us the least degree of pleasure. It is in vain for others to attempt to please us; we cannot please ourselves, though all we could wish for waits our choice: and thus does a capricious woman become "sick of herself, through very selfishness:" And, when this is the case, it is easy to judge how sick others must be of her, and how contemptible and disgusting she must appear. This wretched state is the usual consequence of power and flattery. May my dear child never meet with the temptation of tha cessive and ill-judged indulgence from a hu

which she has happily escaped from her parents, and which seldom fails to reduce a woman to the miserable condition of a humoured child, always unhappy from having nobody's will to study but its own. The insolence of such demands for yourself, and such disregard to the choice and inclinations of others, can seldom fail to make you as many enemies as there are persons obliged to bear with your humours; whilst a compliant, reasonable, and contented disposition, would render you happy in yourself, and beloved by all your companions, particularly by those, who lived constantly with you; and, of what consequence this is to your happiness, a moment's reflection will convince you. Family friendships are the friendships made for us, if I may so speak, by God himself. With the kindest intentions, he has knit the bands of family love, by indispensable duties; and wretched are they who have burst them asunder by violence and ill-will, or worn them out by constant little disobligations, and by the want of that attention to please, which the presence of a stranger always inspires, but which is so often shamefully neglected towards those, whom it is most our duty and interest to please. May you, my dear, be wise enough to see that every faculty of entertainment, every engaging qualification, which you possess, is exerted to the best advantage for [illegible] whose love is of most importance

to you; for those who live under the same roof, and with whom you are connected for life, either by the ties of blood, or by the still more sacred obligations of a voluntary engagement.

To make you the delight and darling of your family, something more is required than barely to be exempt from ill-temper and troublesome humours. The sincere and genuine smiles of complacency and love must adorn your countenance. That ready compliance, that alertness to assist and oblige, which demonstrates true affection, must animate your behaviour, and endear your most common actions. Politeness must accompany your greatest familiarities, and restrain you from every thing that is really offensive, or which can give a moment's unnecessary pain. Conversation, which is so apt to grow dull and insipid in families, nay, in some to be almost wholly laid aside, must be cultivated with the frankness and openness of friendship, and by the mutual communication of whatever may conduce to the improvement or innocent entertainment of each other.

Reading, whether apart or in common, will furnish useful and pleasing subjects; and the sprightliness of youth will naturally inspire harmless mirth and native humour, if encouraged by a mutual desire of diverting each other, and making the hours pass agreeably in your own hou-

every amusement that offers will be heightened by the participation of these dear companions, and by talking over every incident together, and every object of pleasure. If you have any acquired talent of entertainment, such as music, painting, or the like, your own family are those, before whom you should most wish to excel, and for whom you should always be ready to exert yourself: not suffering the accomplishments which you have gained, perhaps by their means, and at their expense, to lie dormant, till the arrival of a stranger gives you spirit in the performance. Where this last is the case, you may be sure vanity is the only motive of the exertion: A stranger will praise you more: But how little sensibility has that heart, which is not more gratified by the silent pleasure painted on the countenance of a partial parent, or of an affectionate brother, than by the empty compliments of a visitor, who is perhaps inwardly more disposed to criticise and ridicule than to admire you?

I have been longer in this letter than I intended, yet it is with difficulty I can quit the subject, because I think it is seldom sufficiently insisted on, either in books or in sermons; and because there are many persons weak enough to believe themselves in a safe and innocent course of life, whilst they are daily harassing every body about them by their vexatious humours. But you will,

I hope, constantly bear in mind, that you can never treat a fellow creature unkindly, without offending the kind Creator and Father of all; and that you can no way render yourself so acceptable to him as by studying to promote the happiness of others, in every instance, small as well as great. The favor of God, and the love of your companions, will surely be deemed rewards sufficient to animate your most fervent endeavours; yet this is not all: the disposition of mind, which I would recommend, is its own reward, and is in itself essential to happiness. Cultivate it therefore, my dear child, with your utmost diligence; and watch the symptoms of ill-temper, as they rise, with a firm resolution to conquer them, before they are even perceived by any other person. In every such inward conflict, call upon your Maker, to assist the feeble nature he hath given you; and sacrifice to *Him* every feeling that would tempt you to disobedience: So will you at length attain that true Christian meekness, which is blessed in the sight of God and man; "which has the promise of this life as well as of that which is to come." Then will you pity, in others, those infirmities, which you have conquered in yourself; and will think yourself as much bound to assist, by your patience and gentleness, those who are so unhappy as to be under the dominion of evil pas-

sions, as you are to impart a share of your riches to the poor and miserable.

Adieu, my dearest.

LETTER VII.

ECONOMY.

My dear Niece,

ECONOMY is so important a part of a woman's character, so necessary to her own happiness, and so essential to her performing properly the duties of a wife and of a mother, that it ought to have the precedence of all other accomplishments, and take its rank next to the first duties of life. It is, moreover, an *art* as well as a *virtue;* and, many well-meaning persons, from ignorance, or from inconsideration, are strangely deficient in it. Indeed it is too often wholly neglected in a young woman's education; and, she is sent from her father's house to govern a family, without the least degree of that knowledge, which should qualify her for it: this is the source of much inconvenience; for though experience and attention may supply, by degrees, the want of instruction, yet this requires time; the family, in the mean time, may get into habits, which are very difficult to alter; and, what is worse, the husband's opinion of his wife's incapacity may be fixed so strongly to suffer him ever to think

justly of her gradual improvements. I would therefore earnestly advise you to make use of every opportunity you can find, for the laying in some store of knowledge on this subject, before you are called upon to the practice; by observing what passes before you; by consulting prudent and experienced mistresses of families; and by entering in a book a memorandum of every new piece of intelligence you acquire: you may afterwards compare these with more mature observations, and you can make additions and corrections as you see occasion. I hope it will not be long before your mother entrusts you with some part, at least, of the management of your father's house. Whilst you are under her eye, your ignorance cannot do much harm, though the relief to her at first may not be near so considerable as the benefit to yourself.

Economy consists of so many branches, some of which descend to such minutenesses, that it is impossible for me in writing to give you particular directions. The rude outlines may perhaps be described, and I shall be happy if I can furnish you with any hint that may hereafter be usefully applied.

The first and greatest point is to lay out your general plan of living in a just proportion to your fortune and rank: if these two will not coincide,

the last must certainly give way; for, if you have right principles, you cannot fail of being wretched under the sense of the injustice as well as danger of spending beyond your income, and your distress will be continually increasing. No mortifications, which you can suffer from retrenching in your appearance, can be comparable to this unhappiness. If you would enjoy the real comforts of affluence, you should lay your plan considerably within your income; not for the pleasure of amassing wealth; though, where there is a growing family, it is an absolute duty to lay by something every year; but to provide for contingencies, and to have the power of indulging your choice in the disposal of the overplus, either in innocent pleasures, or to increase your funds for charity and generosity, which are in fact the true funds of pleasure. In some circumstances, indeed, this would not be prudent: there are professions, in which a man's success greatly depends on his making some figure, where the bare suspicion of poverty would bring on the reality. If, by marriage, you should be placed in such a situation, it will be your duty to exert all your skill in the management of your income: yet, even in this case, I would not strain to the utmost for appearance, but would choose my models among the most prudent and moderate of my own class; [illegible]d with slower

advancement, for the sake of security and peace of mind.

A contrary conduct is the ruin of many; and, in general, the wives of men in such professions might live in a more retired and frugal manner than they do, without any ill consequence, if they did not make the scheme of advancing the success of their husbands an excuse to themselves for the indulgence of their own vanity and ambition.

Perhaps it may be said, that the settling the general scheme of expenses is seldom the wife's province, and that many men do not choose even to acquaint her with the real state of their affairs. Where this is the case, a woman can be answerable for no more than is entrusted to her. But, I think it a very ill sign, for one or both of the parties, where there is such a want of openness, in what equally concerns them. As I trust you will deserve the confidence of your husband, so I hope you will be allowed free consultation with him on your mutual interests; and, I believe, there are few men, who would not hearken to reason on their own affairs, when they saw a wife ready and desirous to give up her share of vanities and indulgences, and only earnest to promote the common good of the family.

In order to settle your plan, it will be necessary to make a pretty exact calculation: and if, from this time, you accustom yourself to calculati

in all the little expenses entrusted to you, you will grow expert and ready at them, and be able to guess very nearly, where certainty cannot be attained. Many articles of expense are regular and fixed; these may be valued exactly; and, by consulting with experienced persons, you may calculate nearly the amount of others: any material article of consumption, in a family of any given number and circumstances, may be estimated pretty nearly. Your own expenses of clothes and pocket-money should be settled and circumscribed, that you may be sure not to exceed the just proportion. I think it an admirable method to appropriate such a portion of your income, as you judge proper to bestow in charity, to be sacredly kept for that purpose, and no longer considered as your own. By which means, you will avoid the temptation of giving less than you ought, through selfishness, or more than you ought, through good-nature or weakness. If your circumstances allow of it, you might set apart another fund for acts of liberality or friendship, which do not come under the head of charity. The having such funds ready at hand makes it easy and pleasant to give; and, when acts of bounty are performed without effect, they are generally done more kindly and effectually. If you are obliged in conscience to lay up for a family, [illegible] me method of an appropriated fund

for saving will be of excellent use, as it will prevent that continual and often ineffectual anxiety, which a general desire of saving, without having fixed the limits, is sure to create.

Regularity of payments and accounts is essential to Economy: your house-keeping should be settled at least once a week, and all the bills paid: all other tradesmen should be paid at farthest once a year. Indeed I think it more advantageous to pay oftener; but, if you make them trust you longer, they must either charge proportionably higher, or be losers by your custom. Numbers of them fail, every year, from the cruel cause of being obliged to give their customers so much longer credit than the dealers, from whom they take their goods, will allow to them. If people of fortune considered this, they would not defer their payments, from mere negligence, as they often do, to the ruin of whole families.

You must endeavour to acquire skill in purchasing: in order to this, you should begin now to attend to the prices of things, and take every proper opportunity of learning the real value of every thing, as well the marks whereby you are to distinguish the good from the bad.

In your table, as in your dress, and in all other things, I wish you to aim at *propriety* and *neatness*, or, if your state demands it, *elegance*, rather than *superfluous figure*. To go beyond your st

either in dress, or in the appearance of your table, indicates a greater fault in your character than to be too much within it. It is impossible to enter into the *minutiæ* of the table: good sense and observation on the best models must form your taste, and a due regard to what you can afford must restrain it.

Ladies, who are fond of needlework, generally choose to consider that as a principal part of good housewifery: and, though I cannot look upon it as of equal importance with the due regulation of a family, yet, in a middling rank, and with a moderate fortune, it is a necessary part of a woman's duty, and a considerable article in expense is saved by it. Many young ladies make almost *every thing* they wear; by which means they can make a genteel figure at a small expense. This, in your station, is the most profitable and desirable kind of work; and, as much of it as you can do, consistently with a due attention to your health, to the improvement of your mind, and to the discharge of other duties, I should think highly commendable. But, as I do not wish you to impose on the world by your appearance, I should be contented to see you worse dressed, rather than see your whole time employed in preparations for it, or any of those hours given to it, which are needful to make your body strong and active by exercise, or your mind rational by reading. Ab-

solute idleness is inexcusable in a woman, because the needle is always at hand for those intervals, in which she cannot be otherwise employed. If you are industrious, and if you keep good hours, you will find time for all your proper employments. Early rising and a good disposition of time, is essential to economy. The necessary orders, and examination into household affairs, should be dispatched, as soon in the day, and as privately as possible, that they may not interrupt your husband or guests, or break in upon conversation, or reading, in the remainder of the day. If you defer any thing that is necessary, you may be tempted by company, or by unforeseen avocations, to forget, or to neglect it: hurry and irregularity will ensue, with expensive expedients to supply the defect.

There is in many people, and particularly in youth, a strange aversion to regularity, a desire to delay what ought to be done immediately, in order to do something else, which might as well be done afterwards. Be assured, it is of more consequence to you than you can conceive, to get the better of this idle procrastinating spirit, and to acquire habits of constancy and steadiness, even in the most trifling matters; without them there can be no regularity, or consistency of action or character; no dependance on your best intentions, which a sudden humour may tempt you to

aside for a time, and which a thousand unforeseen accidents will afterwards render it more and more difficult to execute: no one can say what important consequences may follow a trivial neglect of this kind. For example, I have known one of these *procrastinators* disoblige, and gradually lose very valuable friends, by delaying to write to them so long, that, having no good excuse to offer, she could not get courage enough to write at all, and dropped their correspondence entirely.

The neatness and order of your house and furniture is a part of Economy which will greatly affect your appearance and character, and to which you must yourself give attention since it is not possible even for the *rich* and *great* to rely wholly on the care of servants, in such points, without their being often neglected. The more magnificently a house is furnished, the more one is disgusted with that air of confusion, which often prevails where attention is wanting in the owner. But, on the other hand, there is a kind of neatness, which gives a lady the air of a housemaid, and makes her excessively troublesome to every body, and particularly to her husband: in this, as in all other branches of Economy, I wish you to avoid all parade and bustle. Those ladies who pique themselves on the particular excellence of neatness, are very apt to forget that the decent order of the house should be designed to promote the

convenience and pleasure of those who are to be in it; and that, if it is converted into a cause of trouble and constraint, their husbands and guests would be happier without it. The love of fame, that universal passion, will sometimes shew itself on strangely insignificant subjects; and a person, who acts for praise only, will always go beyond the mark in every thing. The best sign of a house being well governed is that nobody's attention is called to any of the little affairs of it, but all goes on so well of course that one is not led to make remarks upon any thing, nor to observe any extraordinary effort that produces the general result of ease and elegance, which prevails throughout.

Domestic Economy, and the credit and happiness of a family, depend so much on the choice and proper regulation of servants, that it must be considered as an essential part both of prudence and duty. Those, who keep a great number of them, have a heavy charge on their consciences, and ought to think themselves in some measure responsible for the morals and happiness of so many of their fellow-creatures, designed like themselves for immortality. Indeed the cares of domestic management are by no means lighter to persons of high rank and fortune, if they perform their duty, than to those of a retired station. It is with a family, as with a commonwealth,

numerous and luxurious it becomes, the more difficult it is to govern it properly. Though the great are placed above the little attentions and employments, to which a private gentlewoman must dedicate much of her time, they have a larger and more important sphere of action, in which, if they are indolent and neglectful, the whole government of their house and fortune must fall into irregularity. Whatever number of deputies they may employ to overlook their affairs, they must themselves overlook those deputies, and be ultimately answerable for the conduct of the whole. The characters of those servants who are entrusted with power over the rest, cannot be too nicely inquired into; and the mistress of the family must be ever watchful over their conduct; at the same time that she must carefully avoid every appearance of suspicion, which whilst it wounds and injures a worthy servant, only excites the artifice and cunning of an unjust one.

None, who pretend to be friends of religion and virtue, should ever keep a domestic, however expert in business, whom they know to be guilty of immorality. How unbecoming a serious character is it, to say of such an one, "he is a bad man, but a good servant!" What a preference does it shew of private convenience to the interests of society, which der uld be con-

stantly discountenanced, especially in every one's own household; and that the sober, honest, and industrious, should be sure of finding encouragement and reward, in the houses of those who maintain respectable characters. Such persons should be invariably strict and peremptory with regard to the behaviour of their servants, in every thing which concerns the general plan of domestic government; but should by no means be severe on small faults, since nothing so much weakens authority as frequent chiding. Whilst they require precise obedience to their rules, they must prove, by their general conduct, that these rules are the effect not of humour, but of reason. It is wonderful that those, who are careful to conceal their ill-temper from strangers, should be indifferent how peevish and even contemptibly capricious they appear before their servants, on whom their good name so much depends, and from whom they can hope for no real respect, when their weakness is so apparent. When once a servant can say, "I cannot do any thing to please my mistress to-day," all authority is lost.

Those who continually change their servants, and complain of perpetual ill-usage, have good reason to believe that the fault is in themselves, and that they do not know how to govern. Few indeed possess the skill to unite authority with kindness, or are capable of that stead

formly reasonable conduct, which alone can maintain true dignity and command a willing and attentive obedience. Let us not forget that human nature is the same in all stations. If you can convince your servants, that you have a generous and considerate regard to their health, their interest, and their reasonable gratifications; that *you* impose no commands but what are fit and right, nor ever reprove but with justice and temper; *why* should you imagine that they will be insensible to the good they receive, or whence suppose them incapable of esteeming and prizing *such* a mistress? I could never, without indignation, hear it said that "servants have no gratitude;" *as if the* condition of servitude excluded the virtues of humanity. The truth is, masters and mistresses have seldom any real claim to gratitude. They think highly of what they bestow, and little of the service they receive: they consider only their own convenience, and seldom reflect on the kind of life their servants pass with them: they *do not* ask themselves, whether it is such an one as is consistent with the preservation of their health, their morals, their leisure for religious duties, or with a proper share of the enjoyments and comforts of life. The dissipated manners, which now so generally prevail, perpetual absence from home, and attendance on assemblies or at public places, is, in all these respects pernicious to the whole

household, and to the *men servants* absolutely ruinous. Their only resource, in the tedious hours of waiting, whilst their masters and ladies are engaged in diversions, is to find out something of the same kind for themselves. Thus are they led into gaming, drinking, extravagance, and bad company; and thus, by a natural progression, they become distrest and dishonest. That attachment and affiance, which ought to subsist between the dependant and his protector, are destroyed. The master looks on his attendants as thieves and traitors, whilst they consider him as one, whose money only gives him power over them, and, who uses that power, without the least regard to their welfare.

* "The fool saith, I have no friends; I have no thanks for all my good deeds, and they that eat my bread speak evil of me." Thus foolishly do those complain, who choose their servants, as well as their friends, without discretion, or who treat them in a manner that no worthy person will bear.

I have been often shocked at the want of politeness, by which masters and mistresses sometimes provoke impertinence from their servants: a gentleman, who would resent to death an imputation of falsehood from his equal, will not scruple, without proof, to accuse his servant of it, in the grossest terms. I have heard the most insolent contempt of the whole class expressed at

* Eccles. xx. 16.

whilst five or six of them attended behind the chairs, who, the company seemed to think, were without senses, without understanding, or the natural feelings of resentment: these are cruel injuries, and will be retorted in some way or other.

If you, my dear, live to be at the head of a family, I hope you will not only avoid all injurious treatment of your domestics, but behave to them with that courtesy and good-breeding, which will heighten their respect as well as their affection. If, on any occasion, they do more than you have a right to require, give them at least the reward of seeing that they have obliged you. If, in your service, they have any hardship to endure, let them see that you are concerned for the necessity of imposing it. When they are sick, give them all the attention and every comfort in your power, with a free heart and kind countenance; * "not blemishing thy good deeds, nor using uncomfortable words, when thou givest any thing. Is not a word better than a gift? but both are with a gracious man! A fool will upbraid churlishly, and a gift of the envious consumeth the eyes."

Whilst you thus endear yourself to all your servants, you must ever carefully avoid making a favourite of any; unjust distinctions, and weak indulgences to one, will of course excite envy and hatred in the rest. Your favourite may esta-

* Ecclus. xviii.

blish whatever abuses she pleases; none will dare to complain against her, and you will be kept ignorant of her ill practices, but, will feel the effects of them, by finding all your other servants uneasy in their places, and, perhaps, by being obliged continually to change them.

When they have spent a reasonable time in your service, and have behaved commendably, you ought to prefer them, if it is in your power, or to recommend them to a better provision. The hope of this keeps alive attention and gratitude and is the proper support of industry. Like a parent, you should keep in view their establishment in some way, that may preserve their old age from indigence; and to this end, you should endeavour to inspire them with care to lay up part of their gains, and constantly discourage in them all vanity in dress and extravagance in idle expenses. That you are bound to promote their eternal as well as temporal welfare, you cannot doubt, since, next to your children, they are your nearest dependants.

You ought therefore to instruct them as far as you are able, furnish them with good books suited to their capacity, and see that they attend the public worship of God: and you must take care so to pass the sabbath-day as to allow them time, on that day at least, for reading and reflection at home, as well as for attendance at church. Though this is a part of your religious dut-

mention it here, because it is also a part of family management: for the same reason, I shall here take occasion earnestly to recommend family prayers, which are useful to all, but more particularly to servants; who, being constantly employed, are led to the neglect of private prayer; and whose ignorance makes it very difficult for them to frame devotions for themselves, or to choose proper helps, amidst the numerous books of superstitious or enthusiastic nonsense, which are printed for that purpose. Even in a political light, this practice is eligible, since the idea, which it will give them of your regularity and decency, if not counteracted by other parts of your conduct, will probably increase their respect for you, and will be some restraint, at least on their outward behaviour, though it should fail of that inward influence, which in general may be hoped from it.

The prudent distribution of your charitable gifts may not improperly be considered as a branch of economy, since the great duty of alms-giving cannot be truly fulfilled without a diligent attention so to manage the sums you can spare as to produce the most real good to your fellow-creatures. Many are willing to give money, who will not bestow their time and consideration, and who therefore often hurt the community, when they mean to do good to individuals. The larger are

your funds, the stronger is the call upon you to exert your industry and care in disposing of them properly. It seems impossible to give rules for this, as every case is attended with a variety of circumstances which must all be considered. In general, charity is most useful, when it is appropriated to animate the industry of the young, to procure some ease and comforts to old age, and to support in sickness those whose daily labour is their only maintenance in health. They, who are fallen into indigence, from circumstances of ease and plenty, and in whom education and habit have added a thousand wants to those of nature, must be considered with the tenderest sympathy, by every feeling heart. It is needless to say that to such the bare support of existence is scarcely a benefit; and that the delicacy and liberality of the manner, in which relief is here offered, can alone make it a real act of kindness. In great families, the waste of provisions, sufficient for the support of many poor ones, is a shocking abuse of the gifts of providence: nor should any lady think it beneath her to study the best means of preventing it, and of employing the refuse of luxury in the relief of the poor. Even the smallest families may give some assistance in this way, if care is taken that nothing be wasted.

I am sensible, my dear child, that very litt more can be gathered from what I have said

which will be the grace and crown of all your attainments, is the earnest wish of

Your ever affectionate.

LETTER VIII.

ON POLITENESS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

WHILST you labour to enrich your mind with the essential virtues of Christianity, with piety, benevolence, meekness, humility, integrity, and purity; and to make yourself useful in domestic management, I would not have my dear child neglect to pursue those graces and acquirements, which may set her virtue in the most advantageous light, adorn her manners, and enlarge her understanding: and this, not in the spirit of vanity, but in the innocent and laudable view of rendering herself more useful and pleasing to her fellow-creatures, and consequently more acceptable to God. Politeness of behaviour, and the attainment of such branches of knowledge and such arts and accomplishments as are proper to your sex, capacity, and station, will prove so valuable to yourself through life, and will make you so desirable a companion, that the neglect of them may reasonably be deemed a neglect of duty; since it is undoubtedly our duty to cultivate the powers entrusted to us, and to render ourselves as perfect as we can.

You must have often observed that nothing is so strong a recommendation on a slight acquaintance as *politeness;* nor does it lose its value by time or intimacy, when preserved, as it ought to be, in the nearest connections and strictest friendships. This delightful qualification, so universally admired and respected, but so rarely possessed in any eminent degree, cannot but be a considerable object of my wishes for you: nor should either of us be discouraged by the apprehension that neither I am capable of teaching, nor you of learning it, in *perfection*, since whatever degree you attain will amply reward our pains.

To be perfectly polite, one must have great *presence of mind*, with a delicate and quick *sense of propriety;* or, in other words, one should be able to form an instantaneous judgment of what is fittest to be said or done, on every occasion as it offers. I have known one or two persons, who seemed to owe this advantage to nature only, and to have the peculiar happiness of being born, as it were, with another sense, by which they had an immediate perception of what was proper and improper in cases absolutely new to them: but this is the lot of very few: in general, propriety of behaviour must be the fruit of instruction, of observation, and reasoning; and is to be cultivated and improved like any other branch of knowledge or virtue. A good temper is a necessary ground-

work of it; and, if to this is added a good understanding, applied industriously to this purpose, I think it can hardly fail of attaining all that is essential in it. Particular modes and ceremonies of behaviour vary in different countries, and even in different parts of the same town. These can only be learned by observation on the manners of those who are best skilled in them, and by keeping what is called good company. But the principles of politeness are the same in all places. Wherever there are human beings, it must be impolite to hurt the temper or to shock the passions of those you converse with. It must every where be good breeding, to set your companions in the most advantageous point of light, by giving each the opportunity of displaying their most agreeable talents, and by carefully avoiding all occasions of exposing their defects; to exert your own endeavours to please, and to amuse, but not to outshine them; to give each their due share of attention and notice, not engrossing the talk when others are desirous to speak, nor, suffering the conversation to flag, for want of introducing something to continue or renew a subject; not to push your advantages in argument so far that your antagonist cannot retreat with honour: in short, it is an universal duty in society to consider others more than yourself; "in honour preferring one another." Christianity, in this rule, gives t

best lesson of politeness; yet judgment must be used in the application of it: our humility must not be strained so far as to distress those we mean to honour; we must not quit our proper rank, nor force others to treat us improperly; or to accept, what we mean as an advantage against their wills. We should be perfectly easy, and make others so if we can. But this happy ease belongs perhaps to the last stage of perfection in politeness, and can hardly be attained till we are conscious that we know the rules of behaviour, and are not likely to offend against propriety. In a very young person, who has seen little or nothing of the world, this cannot be expected; but a real desire of obliging, and a respectful attention, will in a great measure supply the want of knowledge, and will make every one ready to overlook those deficiencies, which are owing only to the want of opportunities to observe the manners of polite company. You ought not therefore to be too much depressed by the consciousness of such deficiencies, but endeavour to get above the shame of wanting what you have not had the means of acquiring. Nothing heightens this false shame, and the awkwardness it occasions, so much as vanity. The humble mind, contented to be known for what it is, and unembarrassed by the dread of betraying its ignorance, is present to itself. command the use of understanding,

which will generally preserve you from any great indecorum, and will secure you from that ridicule, which is the punishment of affectation rather than of ignorance. People of sense will never despise you, whilst you act naturally; but, the moment you attempt to step out of your own character, you make yourself an object of just ridicule.

Many are of opinion that a very young woman can hardly be too silent and reserved in company; and certainly, nothing is so disgusting in youth as pertness and self-conceit. But, modesty should be distinguished from an awkward bashfulness, and silence should only be enjoined, when it would be forward and impertinent to talk. There are many proper opportunities for a girl, young even as you are, to speak in company, with advantage to herself; and if she does it without conceit or affectation, she will always be more pleasing than those, who sit like statues without sense or motion. When you are silent, your looks should shew your attention and presence to the company: a respectful and earnest attention is the most delicate kind of praise, and never fails to gratify and please. You must appear to be interested in what is said, and endeavour to improve yourself by it: if you understand the subject well enough to ask now and then a pertinent question, or if you can mention any circumstances relating to it that have not before been taken notice of, this will

an agreeable way of shewing your willingness to make a part of the company, and will probably draw a particular application to you, from some one or other. Then, when called upon, you must not draw back as unwilling to answer, nor confine yourself merely to *yes* or *no*, as is the custom of many young persons, who become intolerable burdens to the mistress of the house, whilst she strives in vain to draw them into notice and to give them some share in the conversation.

In your father's house it is certainly proper for you to pay civility to the guests, and to talk to them in your turn, with modesty and respect, if they encourage you to it. Young ladies of near your own age, who visit there, fall of course to your share to entertain. But, whilst you exert yourself to make their visit agreeable to them, you must not forget what is due to the elder part of the company, nor, by whispering and laughing apart, give them cause to suspect, what is too often true, that they themselves are the subjects of your mirth. It is so shocking an outrage against society, to talk of, or laugh at, any person in his own presence, that one would think it could only be committed by the vulgar. I am sorry however to say, that I have too often observed it amongst young ladies, who little deserved that title whilst they indulged their overflowing spirits [illegible] fiance of decency and good nature.

The desire of laughing will make such inconsiderate young persons find a subject of ridicule, even in the most respectable characters. Old age, which, if not disgraced by vice or affectation, has the justest title to reverence, will be mimicked and insulted; and even personal defects and infirmities will too often excite contempt and abuse, instead of compassion. If you have ever been led into such an action, my dear girl, call it seriously to mind, when you are confessing your faults to Almighty God: and, be fully persuaded, that it is not one of the least which you have to repent of. You will be immediately convinced of this, by comparing it with the great rule of justice, that of doing to all as you would they should do unto you. No person living is insensible to the injury of contempt, nor is there any talent so invidious, or so certain to create ill will, as that of ridicule. The natural effects of years, which all hope to attain, and the infirmities of the body, which none can prevent, are surely of all others the most improper objects of mirth. There are subjects enough that are innocent, and on which you may freely indulge the vivacity of your spirits; for I would not condemn you to perpetual seriousness; on the contrary, I delight in a joyous temper, at all ages, and particularly at yours. Delicate and good natured raillery amongst equal friends, if pointed only again

such trifling errors as the owner can heartily join to laugh at, or such qualities as they do not pique themselves upon, is both agreeable and useful; but then it must be offered in perfect kindness and sincere good-humour; if tinctured with the least degree of malice, its sting becomes venomous and detestable. The person rallied should have liberty and ability to return the jest, which must be dropped upon the first appearance of its affecting the temper.

You will wonder, perhaps, when I tell you that there are some characters in the world, which I would freely allow you to laugh at, though not in their presence. Extravagant vanity, and affectation, are the natural subjects of ridicule, which is their proper punishment. When you see old people, instead of maintaining the dignity of their years, struggling against nature to conceal them, affecting the graces and imitating the follies of youth; or a young person assuming the importance and solemnity of old age, I do not wish you to be insensible to the ridicule of such absurd deviations from truth and nature. You are welcome to laugh, when you leave the company, provided you lay up a lesson for yourself at the same time, and remember, that unless you improve your mind whilst you are young, you also will be an insignificant fool in old age; and that, if you are presuming and arrogant in youth, you

are as ridiculous as an old woman with a head-dress of flowers.

In a young lady's behaviour towards gentlemen, great delicacy is certainly required; yet, I believe, women oftener err from too great a consciousness of the supposed views of men than from inattention to those views, or want of caution against them. You are at present rather too young to want rules on this subject; but I could wish that you should behave almost in the same manner three years hence as now; and retain the simplicity and innocence of childhood with the sense and dignity of riper years. Men of loose morals or impertinent behaviour must always be avoided: or, if at any time you are obliged to be in their company, you must keep them at a distance by cold civility. But, with regard to those gentlemen, whom your parents think it proper for you to converse with, and who give no offence by their own manners, to them I wish you to behave with the same frankness and simplicity as if they were of your own sex. If you have natural modesty, you will never transgress its bounds, whilst you converse with a man, as one rational creature with another, without any view to the possibility of a lover or admirer, where nothing of that kind is profest; where it is, I hope, you will ever be equally a stranger to coquetry and prudery; and that you will be able to distinguish the effects of real

esteem and love from idle gallantry and unmeaning fine speeches: the slighter notice you take of these last, the better; and that, rather with good humoured contempt than with affected gravity: but the first must be treated with seriousness and well bred sincerity: not giving the least encouragement which you do not mean, nor assuming airs of contempt, where it is not deserved. But this belongs to a subject, which I have touched upon in a former letter. I have already told you that you will be unsafe in every step which leads to a serious attachment, unless you consult your parents, from the first moment you apprehend any thing of that sort to be intended; let them be your first confidants, and let every part of your conduct, in such a case, be particularly directed by them.

With regard to accomplishments, the chief of these is a competent share of reading, well chosen and properly regulated; and of this I shall speak more largely hereafter. Dancing and the knowledge of the French tongue are now so universal that they cannot be dispensed with in the education of a gentlewoman; and indeed they both are useful as well as ornamental; the first, by forming and strengthening the body, and improving the carriage: the second, by opening a [illegible] of entertainment and improvement for [illegible] believe there are more agreeable

books of female literature in French than in any other language; and, as they are not less commonly talked of than English books, you must often feel mortified in company, if you are too ignorant to read them. Italian would be easily learnt after French, and, if you have leisure and opportunity, may be worth your gaining, though in your station of life it is by no means necessary.

To write a free and legible hand, and to understand common arithmetic, are indispensable requisites.

As to music and drawing, I would only wish you to follow as Genius leads: you have some turn for the first, and I should be sorry to see you neglect a talent, which will at least afford you an innocent amusement, though it should not enable you to give much pleasure to your friends: I think the use of both these arts is more for yourself than for others: it is but seldom that a private person has leisure or application enough to gain any high degree of excellence in them; and your own partial family are perhaps the only persons who would not much rather be entertained by the performance of a professor than by yours: but, with regard to yourself, it is of great consequence to have the power of filling up agreeably those intervals of time, which too often hang heavily on the hands of a woman, if her lot be cast in a retired situation. Besides this, it is certain that ever

[illegible] of knowledge in these arts will [illegible] pleasure in the performances of [illegible] must be improved before it can [illegible] an exquisite relish for any of the [illegible]. An unskilful ear is seldom capable [illegible], or of distinguishing [illegible] charms of [illegible]. The pleasure [illegible] even of contemplating [illegible] Nature, must be greatly heightened [illegible] conversant with the rules of [illegible] considering the most [illegible]. As I look upon taste to be [illegible] innocent delight, I wish [illegible] opportunity of improving it, and of [illegible] of such pleasures. [illegible] rational scheme of [illegible] dissipation, with all its attendants [illegible] and luxury.

[illegible] languages, though I respect [illegible] application of those ladies, who [illegible] them, and who make a modest and [illegible] of them, yet I would by no means advise you, or any woman who is not strongly impelled by a particular genius, to engage in such studies. The labour and time which they require are generally incompatible with our natures and proper employments: the real knowledge which they supply is not essential, since the English, French, or Italian tongues afford tolerable transla-

tions of all the most valuable productions of antiquity, besides the multitude of original authors which they furnish; and these are much more than sufficient to store your mind with as many ideas as you will know how to manage. The danger of pedantry and presumption in a woman, of her exciting envy in one sex and jealousy in the other, of her exchanging the graces of imagination for the severity and preciseness of a scholar, would be, I own, sufficient to frighten me from the ambition of seeing my girl remarkable for learning. Such objections are perhaps still stronger with regard to the abstruse sciences.

Whatever tends to embellish your fancy, to enlighten your understanding, and furnish you with ideas to reflect upon when alone, or to converse upon in company, is certainly well worth your acquisition. The wretched expedient, to which ignorance so often drives our sex, of calling in slander to enliven the tedious insipidity of conversation, would alone be a strong reason for enriching your mind with innocent subjects of entertainment, which may render you a fit companion for persons of sense and knowledge, from whom you may reap the most desirable improvements: for, though I think reading indispensably necessary to the due cultivation of your mind, I prefer the conversation of such persons to every other method of instruction: but, this you cannot hope to enj-

unless you qualify yourself to bear a part in such society, by, at least, a moderate share of reading.

Though *religion* is the most important of all your pursuits, there are not many *books* on that subject, which I should recommend to you at present. Controversy is wholly improper at your age, and it is also too soon for you to inquire into the evidence of the truth of revelation, or to study the difficult parts of scripture: when these shall come before you, there are many excellent books, from which you may receive great assistance. At present, practical divinity, clear of superstition and enthusiasm, but addressed to the heart, and written with a warmth and spirit capable of exciting in it pure and rational piety, is what I wish you to meet with.

The principal study, I would recommend, is *history*. I know of nothing equally proper to entertain and improve at the same time, or that is so likely to form and strengthen your judgment, and, by giving you a liberal and comprehensive view of human nature, in some measure to supply the defect of that experience, which is usually attained too late to be of much service to us. Let me add, that more materials for conversation are supplied by this kind of knowledge, than by almost any other; but I have more to say to you on this

t in a future letter.

The faculty, in which women usually most excel, is that of imagination; and, when properly cultivated, it becomes the source of all that is most charming in society. Nothing you can read will so much contribute to the improvement of this faculty as *poetry*; which, if applied to its true ends, adds a thousand charms to those sentiments of religion, virtue, generosity, and delicate tenderness, by which the human soul is exalted and refined. I hope, you are not deficient in natural taste for this enchanting art, but that you will find it one of your greatest pleasures to be conversant with the best poets, whom our language can bring you acquainted with, particularly those immortal ornaments of our nation, *Shakespear* and *Milton*. The first is not only incomparably the noblest genius in dramatic poetry, but the greatest master of nature, and the most perfect characteriser of men and manners: in this last point of view, I think him inestimable; and I am persuaded, that, in the course of your life, you will seldom find occasion to correct those observations on human nature, and those principles of morality, which you may extract from his capital pieces. You will at first find his language difficult; but, if you take the assistance of a friend, who understands it well, you will by degrees enter into his manner of phraseology, and perceive a thousand beauties, which at first lay buried in obsolete words ar

uncouth constructions. The admirable *Essay on Shakespear* which has lately appeared, so much to the honour of our sex, will open your mind to the peculiar excellences of this author, and enlighten your judgment on dramatic poetry in general, with such force of reason and brilliancy of wit as cannot fail to delight as well as instruct you.

Our great English poet, Milton, is as far above my praise as his *Paradise Lost* is above any thing which I am able to read, except the sacred writers. The sublimity of his subject sometimes leads him into abstruseness; but many parts of his great poem are easy to all comprehensions, and must find their way directly to every heart by the tenderness and delicacy of his sentiments, in which he is not less strikingly excellent than in the richness and sublimity of his imagination. Addison's criticism in the Spectators, written with that beauty, elegance, and judgment, which distinguish all his writings, will assist you to understand and to relish this poem.

It is needless to recommend to you the translations of Homer and Virgil, which every body reads that reads at all. You must have heard that Homer is esteemed the father of poetry, the original from whence all the moderns, not excepting Milton himself, borrow some of their greatest beauties, and from whom they extract those rules for composition, which are found most agreeable

to nature and true taste. Virgil, you know, is the next in rank amongst the classics: you will read his Eneid with extreme pleasure, if ever you are able to read Italian, in Annibal Caro's translation; the idiom of the Latin and Italian languages being more alike, it is, I believe, much closer, yet preserves more of the spirit of the original than the English translations.

For the rest, fame will point out to you the most considerable of our poets; and I would not exclude any of name, among those whose morality is unexceptionable; but of poets as of all other authors, I wish you to read only such as are properly recommended to you; since there are many who debase their divine art, by abusing it to the purposes of vice and impiety. If you could read poetry with a judicious friend, who would lead your judgment to a true discernment of its beauties and defects, it would inexpressibly heighten both your pleasure and improvement. But, before you enter upon this, some acquaintance with the *Heathen Mythology* is necessary. I think that you must before now have met with some book under the title of *The Pantheon:* And, if once you know as much of the gods and goddesses as the most common books on the subject will tell you, the rest may be learned by reading Homer: but then you must particularly attend to him in this view. I do not expect you to penetrate the

numerous mysteries; those amazing depths of morality, religion, and metaphysics; which some pretend to have discovered in his mythology; but, to know the names and principal offices of the gods and goddesses, with some idea of their moral meaning, seems requisite to the understanding almost any poetical composition. As an instance of the *moral meaning* I speak of, I will mention an observation of Bossuet, that Homer's poetry was particularly recommended to the Greeks by the superiority which he ascribes to them over the Asiatics; this superiority is shewn in the Iliad, not only in the conquest of Asia by the Greeks, and in the actual destruction of its capital, but in the division and arrangement of the gods, who took part with the contending nations. On the side of Asia was *Venus*; that is, sensual passion, pleasure, and effeminacy. On the side of Greece was *Juno*; that is, matronly gravity and conjugal love; together with *Mercury*, invention and eloquence; and *Jupiter*, or political wisdom. On the side of Asia was *Mars*, who represents brutal valour and blind fury. On that of Greece was *Pallas*; that is, military discipline, and bravery, guarded by judgment.

This, and many other instances that might be produced, will shew you how much of the beauty of the poet's art must be lost to you, without some notion of [illegible]-l personages. Boys, in

their school-learning, have this kind of knowledge impressed on their minds by a variety of books; but women, who do not go through the same course of instruction, are very apt to forget what little they read or hear on the subject: I advise you therefore never to lose an opportunity of inquiring into the meaning of any thing you meet with in poetry, or in painting, alluding to the history of any of the heathen deities, and of obtaining from some friend an explanation of its connexion with true history, or of its allegorical reference to morality or to physics.

Natural philosophy, in the largest sense of the expression, is too wide a field for you to undertake; but, the study of nature, as far as may suit your powers and opportunities, you will find a most sublime entertainment: the objects of this study are all the stupendous works of the Almighty Hand that lie within the reach of our observation. In the works of man perfection is aimed at, but, it can only be found in those of the Creator. The contemplation of perfection must produce delight, and every natural object around you would offer this delight, if it could attract your attention: if you survey the earth, every leaf that trembles in the breeze, every blade of grass beneath your feet is a wonder as absolutely beyond the reach of human art to imitate as the construction of the universe. Endless pleasures, to those who have

taste for them, might be derived from the endless variety to be found in the composition of this globe and its inhabitants. The fossil, the vegetable, and the animal world, gradually rising in the scale of excellence; the innumerable species of each, still preserving their specific differences from age to age, yet of which no two individuals are ever perfectly alike, afford such a range for observation and inquiry as might engross the whole term of our short life if followed minutely. Besides all the animal creation obvious to our unassisted senses, the eye, aided by philosophical inventions, sees myriads of creatures, which by the ignorant are not known to have existence: it sees all nature teem with life; every fluid, each part of every vegetable and animal, swarm with its peculiar inhabitants; invisible to the naked eye, but as perfect in all their parts, and enjoying life as indisputably as the elephant or the whale.

But, if from the earth, and from these minute wonders, the philosophic eye is raised towards the Heavens, what a stupendous scene there opens to its view! those brilliant lights that sparkle to the eye of ignorance as gems adorning the sky, or as lamps to guide the traveller by night, assume an importance that amazes the understanding! they appear to be *worlds*, formed like ours for a variety of inhabitants; or *suns*, enlightening numberless other worlds too distant for our discovery!

I shall ever remember the astonishment and rapture with which my mind received this idea, when I was about your age; it was then perfectly new to me, and it is impossible to describe the sensation I felt from the glorious, boundless prospect of infinite beneficence bursting at once upon my imagination! Who can contemplate such a scene unmoved? If your curiosity is excited to enter upon this noble inquiry, a few books on the subject, and those of the easiest sort, with some of the common experiments, may be sufficient for your purpose; which is to enlarge your mind, and to excite in it the most ardent gratitude and profound adoration towards that great and good Being, who exerts his boundless power in communicating various portions of happiness through all the immense regions of creation.

Moral philosophy, as it relates to human actions, is of still higher importance than the study of nature. The works of the ancients on this subject are universally said to be entertaining as well as instructive, by those who can read them in their original languages; and such of them as are well translated will undoubtedly, some years hence, afford you great pleasure and improvement. You will also find many agreeable and useful books, written originally in French, and in English, on morals and manners: for the present, there are works, which, without assuming the solemn air of

philosophy, will enlighten your mind on these subjects, and introduce instruction in an easier dress: of this sort are many of the moral essays, that have appeared in periodical papers; which, when excellent in their kind....as are the *Spectators*, *Guardians*, *Ramblers*, and *Adventurers*; are particularly useful to young people, as they comprehend a great variety of subjects; introduce many ideas and observations that are new to them; and lead to a habit of reflecting on the characters and events that come before them in real life, which I consider as the best exercise of the understanding.

Books on taste and criticism will hereafter be more proper for you than at present: whatever can improve your discernment, and render your taste elegant and just, must be of great consequence to your enjoyments as well as to the embellishment of your understanding.

I would by no means exclude the kind of reading, which young people are naturally most fond of; though I think the greatest care should be taken in the choice of those *fictitious stories*, that so enchant the mind, most of which tend to inflame the passions of youth, whilst the chief purpose of education should be to moderate and restrain them. Add to this, that both the writing and sentiments of most novels and romances are such as are only proper to vitiate your style, and

to mislead your heart and understanding. The expectation of extraordinary adventures, which seldom ever happen to the sober and prudent part of mankind, and the admiration of extravagant passions and absurd conduct, are some of the usual fruits of this kind of reading; which, when a young woman makes it her chief amusement, generally renders her ridiculous in conversation, and miserably wrong-headed in her pursuits and behaviour. There are however works of this class, in which excellent morality is joined with the most lively pictures of the human mind, and with all that can entertain the imagination and interest the heart. But, I must repeatedly exhort you, never to read any thing of the sentimental kind, without taking the judgment of your best friends in the choice; for, I am persuaded, that the indiscriminate reading of such kind of books corrupts more female hearts than any other cause whatsoever.

Before I close this correspondence, I shall point out the course of history I wish you to pursue, and give you my thoughts of geography and chronology, some knowledge of both being, in my opinion, necessary to the reading of history with any advantage.

I am, my dearest niece,

Your ever affectionate.

LETTER IX.

ON GEOGRAPHY AND CHRONOLOGY.

My Dear Niece,

I HAVE told you that you will not be able to read history, with much pleasure, or advantage, without some little knowledge of *Geography* and *Chronology*. They are both very easily attained, I mean in the degree that will be necessary for you. You must be sensible that you can know but little of a country, whose situation with respect to the rest of the world you are entirely ignorant of, and that, it is to little purpose that you are able to mention a fact, if you cannot nearly ascertain the *time* in which it happened, which alone, in many cases, gives importance to the fact itself.

In Geography, the easiest of all sciences, and the best adapted to the capacity of children, I suppose you to have made some beginning; to know at least the figure of the earth; the supposed lines; the degrees; how to measure distances; and a few of the common terms: if you do not already know these, two or three lessons will be sufficient to attain them: the rest is the rk of memory, and is easily gained by reading maps; for I do not wish your knowledge to terly, but such only as is neces-

sary for the purpose of understanding history, and, without which, even a newspaper would be unintelligible. It may be sufficient for this end, if, with respect to *ancient* Geography, you have a general idea of the situation of all the great states, without being able precisely to ascertain their limits. But, in the *modern*, you ought to know the bounds and extent of every state in Europe, and its situation with respect to the rest. The other parts of the world will require less accurate knowledge, except with regard to the European settlements.

It may be an useful and agreeable method, when you learn the situation of any important country, to join with that knowledge some one or two leading facts or circumstances concerning it, so that its particular property may always put you in mind of the situation, and the situation, in like manner, recall the particular property. When, for instance, you learn in what part of the globe to find Ethiopia, to be told at the same time that, in that vast unknown tract of country, the Christian religion was once the religion of the state, would be of service, because the geographical and historical knowledge would assist each other. Thus, to join with Egypt, *the nurse and parent of arts and of superstition;* with Persia, *shocking despotism and perpetual revolutions;* with ancient Greece, *freedom and genius;* with Scythia, *bar*

nest and conquest, are hints which you may make use of as you please. Perhaps annexing to any country the idea of some familiar form which it most resembles may at first assist you to retain a general notion of it; thus Italy has been called a *boot*, and Europe compared to a *woman sitting*.

The difference of the ancient and modern names of places is somewhat perplexing; the most important should be known by both names at the same time, and you must endeavour to fix a few of those which are of most consequence so strongly in your mind, by thinking of them, and being often told of them, that the ancient name shall always call up the modern one to your memory, and the modern the ancient: such as the Egean Sea, now *The Archipelago;* The Peloponnesus, now *The Morea;* Crete, *Candia;* Gaul, *France;* Babylon, *Bagdat;* Byzantium, to which the Romans transplanted their seat of empire, *Constantinople*, &c.

There have been so many ingenious contrivances to make Geography easy and amusing, that I cannot hope to add any thing of much service; I would only prevail with you not to neglect acquiring, by whatever method pleases you best, that share of knowledge in it, which you will find necessary, and which is so easily attained; and I entreat that you would learn it in such a manner as to fix it in your mind, so that it may not be lost

and forgotten among other childish acquisitions, but that it may remain ready for use through the rest of your life.

Chronology indeed has more of difficulty; but, if you do not bewilder yourself by attempting to learn too much and too minutely at first, you need not despair of gaining enough for the purpose of reading history with pleasure and utility.

Chronology may be naturally divided into three parts, *the Ancient*, *the Middle* and *the Modern*. With respect to all these the best direction that can be given is to fix on some periods or epochas, which, by being often mentioned and thought of, explained and referred to, will at last be so deeply engraven on the memory, that they will be ready to present themselves whenever you call for them: these indeed should be few, and ought to be well chosen for their importance, since they are to serve as elevated stations to the mind, from which it may look backwards and forwards upon a great variety of facts.

Till your more learned friends shall supply you with better, I will take the liberty to recommend the following, which I have found of service to myself.

In the ancient chronology, you will find there were four thousand years from the creation to the redemption of man; and that Noah and his

family were miraculously preserved in the ark 1650 years after Adam's creation.

As there is no history, except that in the Bible, of any thing before the flood, we may set out from that great event, which happened as I have said above, in the year of the world 1650.

The 2350 years, which passed from the deluge to our Saviour's birth, may be thus divided. There have been four successive *Empires* called *Universal*, because they extended over a great part of the then known world; these are usually distinguished by the name of *The Four great Monarchies*: the three first of them are included in ancient Chronology, and begun and ended in the following manner:

1st, THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE, founded by Nimrod in the year of the world 1800, ended under Sardanapalus in 3250, endured 1450 years.

The Median, though not accounted one of the four great monarchies, being conquests of rebels on the Assyrian empire, comes in here for about 200 years.

2d, THE PERSIAN EMPIRE, which began under Cyrus, in the year of the world 3450, ended in Darius in 3670, before Christ 330, lasted a little more than 200 years.

3d, THE GRECIAN EMPIRE, begun under Alexander the Great in 3670, was soon after his death dismembered by his successors, but the

different parcels into which they divided it were possessed by their respective families, till the famous Cleopatra, the last of the race of Ptolemy, one of Alexander's captains who reigned in Egypt, was conquered by Julius Cæsar, about half a century before our Lord's birth, which is a term of about 300 years.

Thus you see that from the deluge to the establishment of the first great monarchy, the Assyrian, is..... 150 years.

The Assyrian empire continued.....	1450
The Median.....	200
The Persian.....	200
The Grecian.....	300
From Julius Cæsar, with whom began the fourth great monarchy, viz. the Roman, to Christ.....	50
In all	2350 years.

The term from the deluge to Christ.

I do not give you these dates and periods as correctly true, for I have taken only round numbers, as more easily retained by the memory; so that when you come to consult chronological books or tables, you will find variances of some years between them and the above accounts; but precise exactness is not material to a beginner.

I offer this short table as a little specimen of what you may easily do for yourself; bu-

this sketch, slight as it is, will give you a general notion of the ancient history of the world, from the deluge to the birth of Christ.

Within this period flourished the Grecian and Roman republics, with the history and chronology of which it will be expected you should be tolerably well acquainted; and indeed you will find nothing in the records of mankind so entertaining. Greece was divided into many petty states, whose various revolutions and annals you can never hope distinctly to remember; you are therefore to consider them as forming together one great kingdom, like the Germanic body, or the united provinces, composed separately of different governments but sometimes acting with united force for their common interest. The *Lacedemonian* government, formed by Lycurgus in the year of the world 3100, and the *Athenian*, regulated by Solon about the year 3440, will chiefly engage your attention.

In pursuing the *Grecian* chronology, you need only perhaps make one stand or epocha, at the time of *Socrates*, that wisest of philosophers, whom you must have heard of, who lived about 3570 years from the creation, and about 430 before
st; for within the term of 150 years *before*
es, and 200 *after* him, will fall in most of
[illegible] events and illustrious characters of the

I must inform you that the Grecian method of dating time was by *Olympiads*, that is four complete years, so called from the celebration, every fifth year, of the Olympic Games, which were contests in all the manly exercises, such as wrestling, boxing, running, chariot racing, &c. They were instituted in honour of Jupiter, and took their name from Olympia, a city of Elis, near which they were performed: they were attended by all ranks of people, from every state in Greece; the noblest youths were eager to obtain the prize of victory, which was no other than an olive crown, but esteemed the most distinguishing ornament. These games continued all the time that Greece retained any spark of liberty; and with them begins the authentic history of that country, all before being considered as fabulous. You must therefore endeavour to remember that they began in the year of the world 3228; after the flood 1570 years; after the destruction of Troy 400; before the building of Rome 23; before Cyrus about 200, and 770 before Christ. If you cannot retain *all* these dates, at least you must not fail to remember the near coincidence of the first *Olympiad* with the *building of Rome*, which is of great consequence, because, as the Grecians reckoned time by Olympiads, the Romans dated from the building of their city: and as these two eras are within 23 years of each

other, you may, for the ease of memory, suppose them to begin together, in the year of the world 3228.

In reading the history of the *Roman Republic*, which continued in that form of government to the time of Julius Cæsar's dictatorship, about the year of the world 3960, and about 48 years before Christ, you will make as many epochas as you shall find convenient: I will mention only two, the sacking of Rome by the Gauls, which happened in the year of the world 3620, in the 365th year of the city, in the 97th Olympiad, before Christ 385, and about 30 years before the birth of Alexander. The second epocha may be the 608th year of the city, when, after three obstinate wars, Carthage was destroyed, and Rome was left without a rival.

Perhaps the following bad verses, which were given me when I was young, may help to fix in your mind the important eras of the Roman and Grecian dates: You must not laugh at them, for chronologers do not pique themselves on their poetry, but they make use of numbers and rhymes merely as assistants to memory, being so easily learned by heart.

"Rome and Olympiads bear the same date,
"Three thousand two hundred and twenty-eight.
"In * three hundred and sixty was Rome sack'd and torn,
"Thirty summers before Alexander was born."

* That is the city.

You will allow what I have said in these few pages is very easily learned; yet, little as it is, I will venture to say that, was you as perfectly mistress of it as of your alphabet, you might answer several questions relating to ancient Chronology more readily than many who pretend to know something of this science. One is not so much required to tell the precise year, in which a great man lived, as to know with whom he was cotemporary in other parts of the world. I would know then, from the slight sketch above given, about what year of the Roman Republic Alexander the great lived. You would quickly run over in your mind, "Alexander lived in the 3670th year of the world; 330 before Christ; consequently he must have flourished about the *400th of Rome*, which had endured 750 years when Christ was born." Or suppose it was asked, what was the condition of Greece at the time of the sacking of Rome by the Gauls; had any particular state, or the united body, chosen then to take advantage of the misfortunes of the Romans? You consider that the 365th year of the city, the date of that event, is 385 before Christ; consequently this must have happened about the time of Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander, when the Grecians under such a leader, might have extirpated the Roman nation from the earth, had they ever heard of

them, or thought the conquest of them an object worthy their ambition.

Numberless questions might be answered in like manner, even on this very narrow circumscribed plan, if it was completely mastered. I might require that other periods or epochas should be learned with the same exactness; but these may serve to explain my meaning, and to shew how practicable and easy it is. One thing, however, I must observe, though perhaps it is sufficiently obvious; which is, that you can make no use of this sketch of ancient Chronology, nor even hope to retain it, till you have read the ancient *history*. When you have gone through Rollin's Histoire Ancienne *once*, then will be the time to fix the ancient Chronology deep in your mind, which will very much enhance the pleasure and use of reading it a *second* time; for you must remember that nobody reads a history to much purpose, who does not go over it more than once.

When you have got through your course of ancient history, and are come to the more modern, you must then have recourse to the second of the three divisions, viz. *middle Chronology*; containing about 800 years, from the birth of our Lord, and from within 50 years of the rise of the Roman empire, to Charlemagne, who died in 814.

This period, except in the earliest part of it, is too much involved in obscurity to require a very

minute knowledge of its history; it may be sufficient to fix two or three of the most singular circumstances, by their proper dates.

The first epocha to be observed is the year of our Lord 330; when Constantine, the first Christian emperor, who restored peace to the oppressed and persecuted church, removed the seat of empire from Rome to Byzantium, called afterwards from him Constantinople. After his time, about the year 400, began those irruptions of the Goths and Vandals, and other northern nations, who settled themselves all over the western parts of the Roman empire, and laid the foundation of the several states which now subsist in Europe.

The next epocha is the year 622; for the ease of memory say 600; when Mahomet, by his successful imposture, became the founder of the Saracen empire, which his followers extended over a great part of Asia and Africa, and over some provinces of Europe. At the same time, St. Gregory, bishop of Rome, began to assume a spiritual power, which grew by degrees into that absolute and enormous dominion, so long maintained by the popes over the greatest part of Christendom. St. Augustine, a missionary from St. Gregory, about this time, began the conversion of Great Britain to Christianity.

The third and concluding epocha in this division is the year 800; when Charlemagne, king of

France, after having subdued the Saxons, repressed the Saracens, and established the temporal dominion of the pope by a grant of considerable territories, was elected emperor of the west and protector of the church. The date of this event corresponds with that remarkable period of our English history, the union of the Heptarchy, or seven kingdoms, under Egbert.

As to the *third* part of Chronology, namely the *Modern*, I shall spare you and myself all trouble about it at present; for, if you follow the course of reading which I shall recommend, it will be some years before you reach modern history; and, when you do, you will easily make periods for yourself, if you do but remember carefully to examine the dates as you read, and to impress on your memory those of very remarkable reigns or events.

I fear you are by this time tired of Chronology; but, my sole intention in what I have said is to convince you that it is a science not out of your reach, in the moderate degree that is requisite for you: *the last volume of the Ancient Universal History* is the best English Chronological work I know; if that does not come in your way, there is an excellent French one, called Tablettes Chronologiques de l'Histoire Universelle, Du Fresnoy, [redacted] tomes, Paris: there is also a *chart* of universal [redacted]story, including Chronology, and a *Biographical*

chart, both by Priestley, which you may find of service to you.

Indeed, my dear, a woman makes a poor figure who affects, as I have heard some ladies do, to disclaim all knowledge of times and dates: the strange confusion they make of events, which happened in different periods, and the stare of ignorance when such are referred to as are commonly known, are sufficiently pitiable: but the highest mark of folly is to be proud of such ignorance, a resource, in which some of our sex find great consolation.

Adieu, my dear child! I am, with the tenderest affection,

Ever yours.

LETTER X.

ON THE MANNER AND COURSE OF READING HISTORY.

My Dear Niece,

When I recommend to you to gain some insight into the general history of the world, perhaps you will think I propose a formidable task; but, your apprehensions will vanish, when you consider that of near half the globe we have no histories at all; that, of other parts of it, a few facts only are known to us; and that, even of those nations, which make the greatest figure in history, the early ages are involved in obscurity and fable:

it is not indeed allowable to be totally ignorant even of those fables, because they are the frequent subjects of poetry and painting, and are often referred to in more authentic histories.

The first recorders of actions are generally poets: in the historical songs of the bards are found the only accounts of the first ages of every state; but in these we must naturally expect to find truth mixed with fiction, and often disguised in allegory. In such early times, before science has enlightened the minds of men, the people are ready to believe every thing; and the historian, having no restraints from the fear of contradiction or criticism, delivers the most improbable and absurd tales as an account of the lives and actions of their forefathers: thus the first heroes of every nation are gods, or the sons of gods; and every great event is accompanied with some supernatural agency. Homer, whom I have already mentioned as a poet, you will find the most agreeable historian of the early ages of Greece, and Virgil will shew you the supposed origin of the Carthaginians and Romans.

It will be necessary for you to observe some regular plan in your historical studies, which can never be pursued with advantage otherwise than in a continued series. I do not mean to confine you solely to that kind of reading; on the contrary, I wish you frequently to relax with poetry or

some other amusement, whilst you are pursuing your course of history; I only mean to warn you against mixing *ancient* history with *modern*, or *general* histories of one place with *particular reigns*, in another; by which desultory manner of reading, many people distract and confound their memories, and retain nothing to any purpose from such a confused mass of materials.

The most ancient of all histories, you will read in your Bible: from thence you will proceed to L'Histoire Ancienne of Rollin, who very ingeniously points out the connection of prophane with sacred history, and enlivens his narrative with many agreeable and improving reflections; and many very pleasing detached stories and anecdotes, which may serve you as resting places in your journey. It would be an useful exercise of you memory and judgment, to recount these interesting passages to a friend, either by letter or in conversation; not in the words of the author, but in your own natural style, by memory and not by book; and to add whatever remarks may occur to you. I need not say that you will please me much, whenever you are disposed to make this use of *me*.

The want of memory is a great discouragement in historical pursuits, and is what every body complains of. Many artificial helps have been invented, of which, those who have tried

them can best tell you the effects: but the most natural and pleasant expedient is that of conversation with a friend, who is acquainted with the history which you are reading. By such conversations, you will find out how much is usually retained of what is read, and you will learn to select those characters and facts which are best worth preserving: for, it is by trying to remember every thing without distinction, that young people are so apt to lose every trace of what they read. By repeating to your friend what you can recollect, you will fix it in your memory; and, if you should omit any striking particular, which ought to be retained, that friend will remind you of it, and will direct your attention to it on a second perusal. It is a good rule, to cast your eye each day over what you read the day before, and to look over the contents of every book when you have finished it.

Rollin's work takes in a large compass; but, of all the ancient nations it treats of, perhaps there are only the Grecians and Romans, whose stories ought to be read with any anxious desire of retaining them perfectly: for the rest, such as the Assyrians, Egyptians, &c. I believe, you would find, on examination, that most of those, who are supposed tolerably well read in history, remember no more than a few of the most remarkable facts and characters. I tell you this

to prevent your being discouraged on finding so little remain in your mind after reading these less interesting parts of ancient history.

But, when you come to the Grecian and Roman stories, I expect to find you deeply interested and highly entertained; and of consequence, eager to treasure up in your memory those heroic actions and exalted characters, by which a young mind is naturally so much animated and impressed. As Greece and Rome were distinguished as much for genius as valour, and were the theatres, not only of the greatest military actions, the noblest efforts of liberty and patriotism, but of the highest perfection of arts and sciences, their immortal fame is a subject of wonder and emulation, even to these distant ages; and, it is thought a shameful degree of ignorance, even in our sex, to be unacquainted with the nature and revolutions of their governments, and with the characters and stories of their most illustrious heroes. Perhaps, when you are told that the government and the national character of your own countrymen have been compared with those of the Romans, it may not be an useless amusement, in reading the Roman history, to carry this observation in your mind, and to examine how far the parallel holds good. The French have been thought to resemble the Athenians in their genius, though not in their love of liberty. These litt'

hints sometimes serve to awaken reflection and attention in young readers. I leave you to make what use of them you please.

When you have got through Rollin, if you add *Vertot's Revolutions Romaines*, a short, and very entertaining work, you may be said to have read as much as is *absolutely necessary* of ancient history. Plutarch's Lives of famous Greeks and Romans, a book deservedly of the highest reputation, can never be read to so much advantage as immediately after the histories of Greece and Rome: I should even prefer reading each life in Plutarch, immediately after the history of each particular hero, as you meet with them in Rollin or in Vertot.

If hereafter you should choose to enlarge your plan, and should wish to know more of any particular people or period than you find in Rollin, the sources from which he drew may be opened to you; for there are, I believe, French or English translations of all the original historians, from whom he extracted his materials.

Grevier's continuation of Rollin, I believe, gives the best account of the Roman emperors down to Constantine. What shocking instances, will you there meet with, of the terrible effects of lawless power on the human mind! How will you be amazed to see the most promising characters changed by flattery and self-indulgence into mon-

sters that disgrace humanity! to read a series of such lives as those of Tiberius, Nero, or Domitian, would be intolerable, were we not consoled by the view of those excellent emperors, who remained uncorrupted through all temptations. When the mind, disgusted, depressed, and terrified, turns from the contemplation of those depths of vice, to which the human nature may be sunk, a Titus, the delight of mankind, a Trajan, an Antoninus, restore it to an exulting sense of the dignity, to which that nature may be exalted by virtue. Nothing is more awful than this consideration: a human creature given up to vice is infinitely below the most abject brute: the same creature, trained by virtue to the utmost perfection of his nature, is "but a little lower than the angels, and is crowned with glory and immortality."

Before you enter upon the modern history of any particular kingdom, it will be proper to gain some idea of that interval between ancient and modern times, which is justly called the dark and barbarous ages, and which lasted from Constantine to Charlemagne, perhaps one might say to some centuries after. On the irruption of the northern Barbarians, who broke the Roman empire, and dissipated all the treasures of knowledge, as well as of riches, which had been so long accumulating in that enormous state, the Euro-

world may be said to have returned to a second infancy: and the Monkish legends, which are the only records preserved of the times in which they were written, are not less fabulous than the tales of the demi-gods. I must profess myself ignorant how to direct you to any distinct or amusing knowledge of the history of Europe during this period: some collect it from *Puffendorf's Introduction*; some from *The Universal History*; and now, perhaps, with more advantage and delight, from the first volume of *Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, in which he traces the progress of civilization, government, and arts, from the first settlements of the Barbarians; and shews the foundation of the several states, into which Europe is now divided, and of those laws, customs, and politics, which prevail in this quarter of the world.

In these dark ages, you will find no single character so interesting as that of Mahomet; that bold impostor, who extended his usurped dominion equally over the minds and properties of men, and propagated a new religion, whilst he founded a new empire, over a large portion of the globe. His life has been written by various hands.

When you come to the particular histories of the European states, your own country seems to demand the precedence; and, there is no part more commodious to set out from, since you cannot learn the history of Great Britain, without be-

coming in some degree acquainted with almost every neighbouring nation, and without finding your curiosity excited to know more of those, with whom we are most connected.

By the amazing progress of navigation and commerce, within the last two or three centuries, all parts of the world are now connected: the most distant people are become well acquainted, who, for thousands of years, never heard of one another's existence: we are still every day exploring new regions; and every day see greater reason to expect that immense countries may yet be discovered, and America no longer retain the name of the *New World*. You may pass to every quarter of the earth, and find yourself still in the British dominion: this island, in which we live, is the least portion of it; and, if we were to adopt the style of ancient conquerors, we might call it the throne, from which we rule the world. To this boast we are better entitled than some of those who formerly called themselves *Masters of the Globe*, as we possess an empire of greater extent, and, from the superior advantages of our commerce, much greater power and riches; but, we have now too many rivals in dominion, to take upon us such haughty titles.

You cannot be said to know the history of that empire, of which you are a subject, without knowing something of the East and West Indies, w'

so great a part of it is situated: and you will find the accounts of the discovery and conquest of America very entertaining, though you will be shocked at the injustice and cruelty of its conquerors. But with which of the glorious conquerors of mankind must not humanity be shocked! Ambition, the most remorseless of all passions, pursues its object by all sorts of means: justice, mercy, truth, and every thing most sacred, in vain oppose its progress! alas, my dear, shall I venture to tell you that the history of the world is little else than a shocking account of the wickedness and folly of the ambitious! The world has ever been, and, I suppose, ever must be, governed and insulted by these aspiring spirits; it has always, in a greater or less degree, groaned under their unjust usurpation.

But let not the horror of such a scene put a stop to your curiosity: it is proper you should know mankind as they are: You must be acquainted with the heroes of the earth, and perhaps you may be too well reconciled to them: Mankind have in general a strong bias in their favour; we see them surrounded with pomp and splendour, every thing that relates to them has an air of grandeur; --d, whilst we admire their natural powers, we oo apt to pardon the detestable abuse of them, [redacted] and ruin of the human race. We are e glory, and willingly give in to

the delusion; for mighty conquests, like great conflagrations, have something of the sublime that pleases the imagination, though we know, if we reflect at all, that the consequences of them are devastation and misery.

The Western and Eastern world will present to you very different prospects. In *America*, the first European conquerors found nature in great simplicity; society still in its infancy, and consequently the arts and sciences yet unknown: so that the facility, with which they overpowered these poor innocent people, was entirely owing to their superior knowledge in the arts of destroying. They found the inhabitants brave enthusiastic patriots, but without either the military or political arts necessary for their defence. The two great kingdoms of Mexico and Peru had alone made some progress in civilization; they were both formed into regular states, and had gained some order and discipline: from these therefore the Spaniards met with something like an opposition. At first indeed the invaders appeared supernatural beings, who came upon them flying over the ocean, on the wings of the wind, and who, mounted on fiery animals, unknown in that country, attacked them with thunder and lightning in their hands; for such the fire-arms of the Spaniards appeared to this astonished people. But, from being worshipped as gods, they

came to be feared as evil spirits; and in time being discovered to be men, different from the Americans only in their outrageous injustice, and in the cruel arts of destroying, they were abhorred and boldly opposed. The resistance however of a million of these poor naked people, desperately crowding on each other to destruction, served only to make their ruin more complete. The Europeans have destroyed, with the most shocking barbarity, many millions of the original inhabitants of these countries, and have ever since been depopulating Europe and Africa to supply their places.

Though our own countrymen have no reason to boast of the justice and humanity of their proceedings in America, yet, in comparison with those of the Spaniards, our possessions there were innocently acquired. Some of them were gained by conquest, or cession, from Spain and from other European powers; some by contract with the natives, or by settlements on uninhabited lands. We are now possest of a series of colonies, extending above two thousand miles along the whole eastern coast of North America, besides many islands of immense value. These countries, instead of being thinly peopled by a few hordes of ignorant savages, are now adorned with many great cities, and innumerable rich plantations, which have made ample returns to their mother

country, for the dangers and expenses which attended their first establishment. Blest with more natural advantages than almost any country in the world, they are making a swift progress in wealth and grandeur, and seem likely, in some future period, to be as much the seat of empire and of science as Europe is at present. Whether their attainments in virtue and happiness will keep pace with their advancement in knowledge, wealth, and power, is much to be questioned; for you will observe, in your historical view of the several great empires of the world, that as each grew up towards the highest pitch of greatness, the seeds of destruction grew up with it; luxury and vice, by debasing the minds, and enervating the bodies of the people, left them all, in their turns, an easy prey to poorer and more valiant nations.

In the east, the Europeans introduced themselves in a milder way: admitted first as traders, and, for the more commodious carrying on their commerce, indulged by the powers of the country, in establishing a few small factories; they by gentle degrees extended and strengthened their settlements there, till their force became considerable enough to be thought an useful auxiliary to contending princes; and, as it has often happened to those who have called in foreign powers to interfere in their domestic conten-

tions, by availing themselves of the disturbances of a dismembered monarchy, they at length raised a power, almost independent of their employers. Soon the several European nations, who had thus got footing in the Indies, jealous of each other's growing greatness, made the feuds of the native princes subservient to their mutual contests; till within a few years, the English, by a happy concurrence of circumstances, obtained the mastery, and expelled their rivals from all their considerable settlements.

The rapidity of our conquests here has been perhaps equal to that of the first invaders of America, but from different causes. Here we found an old established empire advanced to its crisis; the magnificence and luxury of the great carried to the highest excess, and the people in a proportionable degree of oppression and debasement. Thus ripe for destruction, the rivalships of the viceroys, from the weakness of the government, become independent sovereigns, and the dastardly spirit of the meaner people, indifferent to the cause for which they were compelled to fight, encouraged these ambitious merchants to push their advantages farther than they could at first have supposed possible: with astonishment they saw the intrepid leaders of a few hundreds of free Britons boldly oppose and repeatedly [illegible] of these effeminate Indian

slaves; and, in a short time, raise for them an empire much larger than their mother country.

From these remote quarters of the world, let us now return to Great Britain, with the history of which, you ought certainly to acquaint yourself, before you enter upon that of any other European kingdom. If you have courage and industry enough to begin so high as the invasion of Julius Cæsar, before which nothing is known of the inhabitants of this island, you may set out with Rapin, and proceed with him to William the Conqueror. From this era there are other histories of England more entertaining than his, though, I believe, none esteemed more authentic. Party so strongly influences both historians and their readers, that it is a difficult and invidious task to point out the *best* amongst the number of English histories that offer themselves: but, as *you* will not read with a critical view, nor enter deeply into politics, I think you may be allowed to choose that which is most entertaining; and, in this view, I believe the general voice will direct you to Hume, though he goes no farther than the Revolution. Among other *historians*, do not forget my darling *Shakespear*, a faithful as well as a most agreeable one, whose historical plays, if read in a series, will fix in your memory the reigns he has chosen, more durably than any other history. You need not fear his leading you into any mate-

rial mistakes, for he keeps surprisingly close to the truth, as well in the characters as in the events. One cannot but wish he had given us a play on the reign of every English king, as it would have been the pleasantest, and perhaps the most useful way of becoming acquainted with it.

For the other portion of Great Britain, Robertson's History of Scotland is a delightful work, and of a moderate size.

Next to your own country *France* will be the most interesting object of your inquiries; our ancient possessions in that country, and the frequent contests we have been engaged in with its inhabitants, connect their history with our own. The extent of their dominion and influence; their supposed superiority in elegance and politeness; their eminence in the Arts and Sciences; and that intercourse of thought, if I may so call it, which subsists between us, by the mutual communication of literary productions, make them peculiarly interesting to us; and we cannot but find our curiosity excited to know their story, and to be intimately acquainted with the character, genius, and sentiments of this nation.

I do not know of any general history of France that will answer your purpose except that of *Mezerai*, which, even in the abridgment, is a pretty large work: there is a very modern one by *Velly, and others*, which perhaps may be more lively, but

is still more voluminous, and not yet completed. From Mezerai, you may proceed with Voltaire to the end of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth.

In considering the rest of Europe, your curiosity may be confined within narrower limits. Modern history is, from the nature of it, much more minute and laborious than the ancient, and to pursue that of so many various kingdoms and governments would be a task unequal to your leisure and abilities, at least for several years to come; at the same time, it must be owned that the present system of politics and commerce has formed such a relation between the different powers of Europe, that they are in a manner members of one great body, and a total ignorance of any considerable state would throw an obscurity even upon the affairs of your own country: an acquaintance however with the most remarkable circumstances, that distinguish the principal governments, will sufficiently enlighten you, and will enable you to comprehend, whatever relates to them, in the histories with which you are more familiar. Instead of referring you for this purpose to dull and uninteresting abridgments, I choose rather to point out to you a few small Tracts, which exhibit striking and lively pictures, not easily effaced from the memory, of the constitutions and the most remarkable transactions of several of these nations. Such are

Sir William Temple's Essay on the United Provinces.

His Essay on Heroic Virtue, which contains some account of the Saracen Empire.

Vertot's Revolutions de Suede.

..... de Portugal.

Voltaire's Charles 12 de Suede.

..... Pierre le Grand.

Puffendorf's Account of the Popes, in his Introduction to Modern History.

Some part of the History of Germany and Spain, you will see more in detail in Robertson's History of Charles the Vth, which I have already recommended to you, in another view.

After all this, you may still be at a loss for the transactions of Europe, in the last fifty years; for the purpose of giving you, in a very small compass, some idea of the state of affairs during that period, I will venture to recommend one book more, *Campbell's State of Europe.*

Thus much may suffice for that moderate scheme, which I think is best suited to your sex and age. There are several excellent histories, and memoirs of particular reigns and periods, which I have taken no notice of in this circumscribed plan; but, with which, if you should happen to have a taste for the study, you will hereafter choose to be acquainted: these will be read with most advantage, after you have gained some

general view of history; and they will then serve to refresh your memory, and settle your ideas distinctly, as well as enable you to compare different accounts of the persons and facts which they treat of, and to form your opinions of them on just grounds.

As I cannot, with certainty, foresee what degree of application or genius for such pursuits you will be mistress of, I shall leave the deficiencies of this collection to be supplied by the suggestions of your more informed friends, who, if you explain to them how far you wish to extend your knowledge, will direct you to the proper books.

But if, instead of an eager desire for this kind of knowledge, you should happen to feel that distaste for it, which is too common in young ladies, who have been indulged in reading only works of mere amusement, you will perhaps rather think that I want mercy in offering you so large a plan, than that there needs an apology for the deficiencies of it: but, comfort yourself with the assurance, that a taste for history will grow and improve by reading: that as you get acquainted with one period or nation, your curiosity cannot fail to be awakened for what concerns those immediately connected with it; and thus, you will insensibly be led on, from one degree of knowledge to another.

If you waste in trivial amusement the next three or four years of your life, which are the prime season of improvement, believe me, you will hereafter bitterly regret their loss: when you come to feel yourself inferior in knowledge to almost every one you converse with; and, above all, if you should ever be a mother, when you feel your own inability to direct and assist the pursuits of your children, you will then find ignorance a severe mortification and a real evil. Let this, my dear, animate your industry, and let not a modest opinion of your own capacity be a discouragement to your endeavours after knowledge; a moderate understanding, with diligent and well-directed application, will go much farther than a more lively genius, if attended with that impatience and inattention, which too often accompanies quick parts. It is not from want of capacity that so many women are such trifling insipid companions, so ill qualified for the friendship and conversation of a sensible man, or for the task of governing and instructing a family; it is much oftener from the neglect of exercising the talents which they really have, and from omitting to cultivate a taste for intellectual improvement: by this neglect, they lose the sincerest of pleasures; a pleasure, which would remain when almost every other forsakes them; which neither fortune nor age can deprive them of, and which

would be a comfort and resource in almost every possible situation of life.

If I can but inspire you, my dear child, with the desire of making the most of your time and abilities, my end is answered; the means of knowledge will easily be found by those who diligently seek them, and they will find their labours abundantly rewarded.

And now, my dear, I think it is time to finish this long correspondence, which, though in some parts it may have been tedious to you, will not, I hope, be found entirely useless in any. I have laid before you all that my maturest reflections could enable me to suggest, for the direction of your conduct through life. My love for you, my dearest child, extends its views beyond this frail and transitory existence; it considers you as a candidate for immortality, as entering the list for the prize of your high calling, as contending for a crown of unfading glory. It sees, with anxious solicitude, the dangers that surround you, and the everlasting shame that must follow, if you do not exert all your strength in the conflict. Religion therefore has been the basis of my plan, the principle, to which every other pursuit is ultimately referred. Here then I have endeavoured to guide your researches; and to assist you in forming just notions on a subject of such infinite importance, I have shewn you the necessity of regulating your

heart and temper, according to the genuine spirit of that religion, which I have so earnestly recommended as the great rule of your life. To the same principle, I would refer your attention to domestic duties; and, even that refinement and elegance of manners, and all those graces and accomplishments, which will set your virtues in the fairest light, and will engage the affection and respect of all who converse with you. Endeared to society by these amiable qualities, your influence in it will be more extensive, and your capacity of being useful proportionably enlarged. The studies, which I have recommended to you, must be likewise subservient to the same views; the pursuit of knowledge, when it is guided and controlled by the principles I have established, will conduce to many valuable ends: the habit of industry, it will give you, the nobler kind of friendships, for which it will qualify you, and its tendency to promote a candid and liberal way of thinking, are obvious advantages. I might add, that a mind well informed in the various pursuits which interest mankind and the influence of such pursuits on their happiness, will embrace, with a clearer choice, and will more steadily adhere to, those principles of virtue and religion, which the judgment must ever approve, in proportion as it becomes enlightened.

May those delightful hopes be answered which have animated my heart, while with diligent attention I have endeavoured to apply to your advantage all that my own experience and best observation could furnish. With what joy should I see my dearest girl shine forth a bright example of every thing that is amiable and praise-worthy! and how sweet would be the reflection that I had, in any degree, contributed to make her so! My heart expands with the affecting thought, and pours forth in this adieu the most ardent wishes for your perfection! If the tender solicitude expressed for your welfare by this "labour of love" can engage your gratitude, you will always remember how deeply your conduct interests the happiness of

Your most affectionate Aunt.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

THE

WORKS

OF

MRS. CHAPONE:

NOW FIRST COLLECTED.

CONTAINING

I. LETTERS ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE MIND.
II. MISCELLANIES.
III. CORRESPONDENCE WITH MR. RICHARDSON.
IV. LETTERS TO MISS CARTER.
V. FUGITIVE PIECES.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

AN ACCOUNT OF HER LIFE AND CHARACTER,

DRAWN UP

BY HER OWN FAMILY.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY W. WELLS AND T. B. WAIT AND CO.
Court-street.
1809.

TO MRS. ELIZABETH CARTER.

DEAR MADAM,

AS my presumption, in offering this little volume to the public, has been principally excited by you, and your admirable friend, Mrs. MONTAGU, it is fit you should take your share of whatever blame it may incur. After a course of years, which should have added to my judgment what it has taken from my imagination, and in which vanity and ambition have been sufficiently repressed by affliction, to produce to the world the trifling performances of my youth, which I then had modesty enough to conceal, is, I must confess, what my own feelings would never have dictated, had not two such friends, whose judgment and sincerity I could not distrust, pronounced that so it must be. With such supporters, however, I think myself secure against contempt, and that when it shall be known that both my youth and

age have been blessed and honoured with the friendship of Mrs. CARTER, the world will be disposed to treat me with kindness, unless that kindness should be intercepted by envy.

The following little poems you know were most of them written when I was very young, and all of them (except the translations) many years ago; the last has already appeared in a far more honourable station, at the head of your admirable translation of Epictetus; but as many persons read poetry who do not read philosophy, I am advised to reprint it here.

The prose essays (excepting the Story of Fidelia, which appeared in the Adventurer) are late compositions. I fear the greater number of my readers may think them too strongly tinctured with that seriousness which has long been the prevailing habit of my mind; while others, of a more similar cast of thought, may possibly be led by them to useful and improving reflections. If in any mind they should raise or strengthen a single sentiment fa-

vourable to virtue, I shall be better rewarded than by the most universal applauses of the public.

Esteemed and honoured as is my excellent friend, amongst the most distinguished characters of this country, I persuade myself that she will not disdain my humbler testimony to that worth, which I prefer to all the learning and genius that have gained her the general admiration of the world; but that she will allow me to boast of a title which I consider as the highest honour, that of

Her most affectionate
And faithful friend,
H. CHAPONE.

Wardour Street,
Jan. 20, 1775.

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MISCELLANIES.

ESSAY I.

ON AFFECTATION AND SIMPLICITY.

If I were asked which of all the qualities that constitute an amiable character would singly go farthest in gaining my love and admiration, I should answer, without hesitation, *Simplicity*. I cannot suppose myself peculiar in this preference; for I have observed the general attraction of this quality, which operates even on those who are themselves most deficient in it. How comes it then to pass that an excessive desire of admiration always shews itself in *Affectation* of some kind or other? That every one should, in proportion to the strength of this desire, act in a manner which most effectually defeats the accomplishment of it, is surely a phenomenon in the moral world, not unworthy the inquiry of philosophers.

Affectation is so universally acknowledged to be disgusting, that it is among the faults which the most intimate friends cannot venture gravely to reprove in each other; for, to tell your friends that they are habitually affected, is to tell them

that they are habitually disagreeable; which nobody can bear to hear. I beg leave therefore, as a general friend, without offending any one, to whisper to all those whose hearts confess that vanity has inspired them with any sort of affectation, *that it never does, nor never can succeed as a means of pleasing*.

I have a thousand times wished to tell *Flirtilla*, that the efforts she makes to be constantly in motion, and perpetually giggling, do not pass upon me for the vivacity of youth: I see they cost her a great deal of trouble, and it gives me an irritation of nerves to look at her; so that it would have been much for her ease and mine, could I have ventured to beg that she would always in my presence give way to her natural languor and dulness, which would be far more agreeable to me.

Gloriosa, whenever a remarkable instance of generosity or goodness is mentioned, takes infinite pains, with the most pompous eloquence, to convince me that the action seems poor to the greatness of *her* soul; that *she* should think half her fortune a trifling gift to a worthy friend; that she would rather suffer the most exquisite pain herself, than see a fellow creature, though a stranger, endure it; and that it is a nobler effort in *her* to *refrain* from the most generous actions, than it would be in the greatest miser to perform them. I long to let her know, that the only effect

these declarations produce in my mind is, a doubt, which I should otherwise never have entertained, whether she really possesses even the common portion of good-nature and benevolence.

Humanus, on the other hand, need not be so much ashamed of his tenderness and goodness of heart; which is the only agreeable part of his character, and which all his affected roughness and insensibility cannot hide. Be content, good Humanus; you never can attain the reputation to which you aspire, of a stern unfeeling heart; we all know you are good-natured and affectionate; and it is for the sake of these qualities alone that we endure all the disgusting airs of brutality you give yourself.

Poor young *Saunter*, having observed that the few men of fashion and fortune who admit him into their company are gamesters and debauchées, thinks nothing is more necessary to make him appear like a man of fashion and fortune than to be thought a gamester and a debauchée. To this end he really practises some vices, and professes many more. He will entertain you for hours with boasting of ruinous bets which he never made, and riotous debauches of which he never was guilty. But nobody believes him: every body knows that the poor young man would be sober enough, if he thought it genteel; and, notwithstanding the great spirit with which he professes

to despise his too indulgent father, and to wish him dead, there are strong suspicions that he is not absolutely without natural affection, and that he really does not behave ill to the good old man, except in the article of spending too much of his money. Let me persuade you, Saunter, to make an experiment, whether the world would not receive you as well with a few good qualities, as with all the bad ones you assume. If you find it does not succeed, you may more easily return to the ways of vice, than you could to those of virtue should you delay much longer, and should you ever have sense enough to perceive what a despicable animal vanity has made you.

The important airs and insolence of a rich mechanic, just setting up for a gentleman, is not a more decisive mark of a low-lived man, than the overstrained humility of *Superbia* is of an immeasurable pride. Whilst she depreciates herself in every sentence, and affects to exalt her companions so far above her, that she will scarcely allow herself worthy to converse with them, she makes them feel her proud condescension in a manner that is more offensive than the most openly assumed superiority. Her aim is, to place in the strongest point of view the advantages she has, or thinks she has, over them, and then to be supposed superior in herself to all those advantages, by such humility as must heighten

their respect and admiration. Poor woman! she fails in both these aims. Her affected humility renders her contemptibly ridiculous; and her real pride arms every body's self-love against her, and disposes them to undervalue those circumstances on which they see she founds her consequence.

As liars often presume so far on the politeness of the company, which forbids the flat contradiction of a matter of fact, as to utter the most palpable falsehoods; so the persons I have described presume, on the same grounds, that every one they converse with is the dupe of their affectation. A little better opinion of the sagacity of others would save both the *affected* and the *cunning* a world of unnecessary trouble. Cunning does indeed sometimes succeed in deceiving the particular person to whom it is applied; but a man characteristically artful is almost always seen through by the generality of the world. Affected gestures, manner, or sentiments in conversation are obvious to every understanding: every one joins in pronouncing them ridiculous. One of the most affected women I ever knew, said to me once, in a tone of the utmost languor, "You know one had better be *dead* than be *affected*!" thus, all condemn what they expect to be admired for; and hope, against all reason and probability, to impose on the world by the same arts

which they can themselves so easily discern in others, and so readily join to deride.

While the vain man is painfully striving to outshine all the company, and to attract their admiration, by false wit, forced compliments, and studied graces, he must surely be mortified to observe how constantly *Simplicius* engages their attention, respect, and complacency, without having once thought of himself as a person of any consequence among them. Simplicius imparts his superior knowledge, when called upon, as easily and naturally as he would tell you what it is o'clock; and with the same readiness and good will informs the most ignorant, or confers with the most learned. He is as willing to receive information as to give it, and to join the company, as far as he is able, in the most trifling conversation into which they happen to fall, as in the most serious or sublime. If he disputes, it is with as much candour on the most important and interesting, as on the most insignificant subjects, and he is not less patient in hearing than in answering his antagonist. If you talk to him of himself, or his works, he accepts praise, or acknowledges defects, with equal meekness, and it is impossible to suspect him of affectation in either. We are more obliged and gratified by the plain unexaggerated expressions of his regard, than by the compliments and attentions of

the most accomplished pattern of high-breeding; because his benevolence and sincerity are so strongly marked in every look, word, and action, that we are convinced his civilities are offered for our sakes, not for his own, and are the natural effects of real kindness, not the studied ornaments of behaviour. Every one is desirous to shew him kindness in return, which we know will be accepted just as it is meant. All are ready to pay him that deference which he does not desire, and to give him credit for more than he assumes, or even for more than he possesses. With a person ungraceful, and with manners unpolished by the world, his behaviour is always proper, easy, and respectable; as free from constraint and servility in the highest company, as from haughtiness and insolence in the lowest. His dignity arises from his humility; and the sweetness, gentleness, and frankness of his manners, from the real goodness and rectitude of his heart, which lies open to inspection in all the fearlessness of truth, without any need of disguise or ornament.

Where this foundation of real virtue is wanting, every art of pleasing is but the thin superficial covering of deformity, which becomes the more disgusting by the pains taken to dress it in false colours. No wonder then that *Simplicity* is so sure of attracting love and approbation, since it implies

almost every other virtue. No wonder that the heart, where envy, pride, and vanity reside, will not venture to trust itself to the lips or eyes. "*Dare to be what you are,*" is a good maxim; but it will only be put in practice by those who are what they ought to be. Every one may however rest assured, that they are generally *known* for what they are, and that falshood, like Cain, has a mark set upon it by Heaven. This mark may not be discerned on a superficial view, nor by the foolish, the young, and inexperienced; but in a short course of years it will be discovered by so many eyes, that the world cannot be kept ignorant of it, and it will then be punished by the scorn it deserves.

Whoever, therefore, desires to please, to be respected and beloved, let him first give his attention to the inward state of his mind. When all is right there, outward elegances may be easily attained, or the want of them easily excused. But if nature and the heart have no share in dictating his behaviour, his looks, and his sentiments, he may be a fop, a dancing-master, a courtier, or a spy; but he can never be an amiable man.

This, the noble writer, whose letters to his son have lately engaged the attention of the public, seems to have forgotten. Intent on those worldly advantages, which cannot be attained without the goo[illegible] he unweariedly recommends

and enforces the *appearances* of all that he thinks engaging, but forgets that those appearances must be the result of real excellences, which he takes no pains to inculcate. Even * sweetness of countenance he thinks may be put on and adjusted at the glass, like the rouge and the bouquet; and that his son may possess *les manieres nobles*, and all the charms of liberal and ingenuous youth, whilst in reality he regulates his † friendships by his views of future advancement; ‡ con-

* Vide Lord Chesterfield's Letters, Letter 220. "Learn even to compose your *countenance* to the respectful, the cheerful, and the insinuating." Letter 221. "An air, a tone of voice, a composure of countenance to mildness and softness, which are all easily acquired, do the business; and without farther examination, and possibly with the contrary qualities, that man is reckoned the gentlest, the modestest, the best natured man alive. Happy the man who with a certain fund of parts and knowledge gets acquainted with the world early enough to make it his *bubble*, at an age when most people are the bubbles of the world! for that is the common case of youth."

† Vide Letters 140 and 207.

‡ Vide Letter 151. In this Letter his lordship quotes, from Lord Bacon, the distinction between *simulation* and *dissimulation*; "the last of which is only to hide a man's own cards, whereas *simulation* is put on in order to look into other people's." But does not the following account of his own management, which he recommends to his son as an example, come under the description of *simulation?* "I should desire nothing better in any negotiation, than to have to do with one of these men of warm, quick passions, which I would take care to set in motion. By artful provocations I would extort rash unguarded expressions; and, by hinting at all the several things I could suspect, infallibly discover the true one, by t'

ceals every passion and sentiment of his own heart, and takes advantage of those of others; whilst he sets no other bounds to his flattery, but those of the credulity of his companions, and lavishes every mark of attention and admiration, of kindness and good nature, with no other motive or end but his own advantage. The favourite maxim which his lordship so often repeats, *"*"*Il volto sciolto, i pensieri stretti,*" he thinks as practicable as it is convenient; forgetting that an open countenance is the index nature gave to an open ingenuous heart; and that the best teacher can hardly bring a youth of nineteen to such perfection in hypocrisy, as to give his face and air the frankness proper to his age, and his mind the cunning and design of an old statesman. But, God be praised! we are not constituted to be the dupes of every shallow artifice; and a hypocrite under twenty has very little chance of making "*the world his bubble.*"† Scarcely even the weakest of that sex which his lordship considers as far below rationality,‡ would be much charmed with a youth who had been tutored by his fa-

alteration it occasioned in the countenance of the person." Is not this to look into another man's cards? As a *minister* it may be *able conduct*, but as a *man* it is surely *detestable*.

* The countenance open, the thoughts close.

† Vide note p. 9.

‡ Letter 129.

ther to make love* *wherever he went*, because it was *cheaper* and *safer* to have an *arrangement* with a married woman of fashion, than to keep an opera girl. It is impossible to think of this in a moral light without a degree of horror, which obscures the ridicule of it. That such precepts should have been the instructions of a father to his son, and that they should be publicly offered to the youth of a nation where the sacredness of marriage and the bonds of family love are not yet entirely exploded, are indeed most alarming symptoms of corruption. The mean self-love, which is thus inculcated, at the expense of the most important interests of society, must shew itself through the whole man, in spite of the frippery in which his lordship would dress him. Elegance of mind can alone produce true elegance of behaviour. *Les manieres douces* belong to a gentle and good heart; *les manieres nobles* to a spirit of generosity, bravery, and truth.

"*Worth* makes the *man*, and want of it the *fellow*;
"The rest is all but leather or prunella." *Pope.*

* Letter 242. "Address yourself to some woman of fashion and beauty *wherever you are*, and try how far that will go. If the place be not secured beforehand, and garrisoned, nine times in ten you will take it." Sometimes his lordship directs him to address *two* at the same time; *one* as a Mad. l'Ursay, to instruct him in the art of pleasing, the *other* to exercise those arts upon. Mad. de Blot is chosen for this last office, on account of her perverse fidelity to her husband, "*tho' married above a year.*"

ESSAY II.

ON CONVERSATION.

I HAVE always considered the universal practice of card-playing as particularly pernicious in this respect, that, whilst it keeps people perpetually in company, it excludes conversation. The hours which are spent in society may be made, not only the most agreeable, but perhaps the most useful of any, provided our companions are well chosen. But though this cannot always be the case, and though few persons are qualified to make a figure in conversation, or to give it all the advantage of which it is capable, yet, even amongst those of moderate understanding and knowledge, it seems almost impossible that an evening should pass in mutual endeavours to entertain each other, without something being struck out that would in some degree enlighten and improve the mind. If we are not instructed by what we hear, we may at least derive some advantage from the exercise of our own powers, from being obliged to recollect and produce what we know or what we think on the topics which arise; and whilst the understanding is thus kept in action, though perhaps on subjects not very important, it is certainly more likely to acquire some vigour, than whilst its attention is confined to the management of a hand

of cards. In the mean time our self-command may be improving by the exercise of politeness; which teaches us to offer our favourite opinions with modesty, to hear them controverted with good-humour, and to maintain them with moderation: to listen with patient attention to a tedious or a well known story; to answer an objection that is nothing to the purpose, and make some civil reply to an argument too confused to be underderstood. These are useful, though not very pleasant, exertions of benevolence and self-denial; and such utility may be derived even from those who can no otherwise contribute to our improvement. Many more pleasing advantages one should expect to find in the company of persons of fashion and education.

But, alas! if one attends to the numerous *abuses* of conversation, and observes how often it offends against some of the first principles of morality, one is tempted to think that even card-playing, though it interests none but the most unlovely passions, is a less dangerous method of employing time.

Many are the natural temptations to offences of the tongue, from which we are constantly in danger in all times and all places. But some of those which prevail in our present polite circles, *seem to* arise merely from the *ton* which has been *imported to* us from a neighbouring nation, where

perhaps the same things may be natural and harmless, which, *in us*, are affected, and fruitful of bad consequences. Surely nothing can be less natural to the dry and reserved temper of the English, than that flow of unbounded flattery which seems the established commerce of the *grand monde*, but which, to a modest mind, unhardened by the constant use of it, is really quite overwhelming. That deep and affecting interest, with which a mere common acquaintance talks to you for half an hour of your slightest indisposition; those tender professions of affection and esteem; that admiration, which exhausts the language to express itself, are so exceedingly uncongenial to an English heart (slow to expand itself, though warm and steady in real affection) that they never sit handsomely on us; and, though we may be pleased at the moment with the self-consequence given us, we soon feel a degree of disgust arising towards those from whom we receive it.

Another fashion, very inconvenient to a people naturally grave, is that of being always gay. Lively airs and diverting sallies are so essential in a fashionable company, that, if they cannot be kept up by harmless wit and humour, they must be produced by throwing an air of ridicule on the most important subjects, and the most respectable characters; not excepting the principles we

profess to believe, or the persons we profess to esteem.

Thus, whilst we lavish our praise on those who are present (a practice which untaught nature would blush at) we derive all our mirth from the absent, to whom we are not less liberal of abuse and ridicule (an injustice which every honest peasant would scorn.) Some are even shameless enough to begin their ridicule on those who have just quitted the room, and whom they have been grossly flattering; though it is so obvious, that the remaining part of the company, after having been fatigued with bowing to their compliments, must expect the same fate in their turn, as their carriages drive from the door.

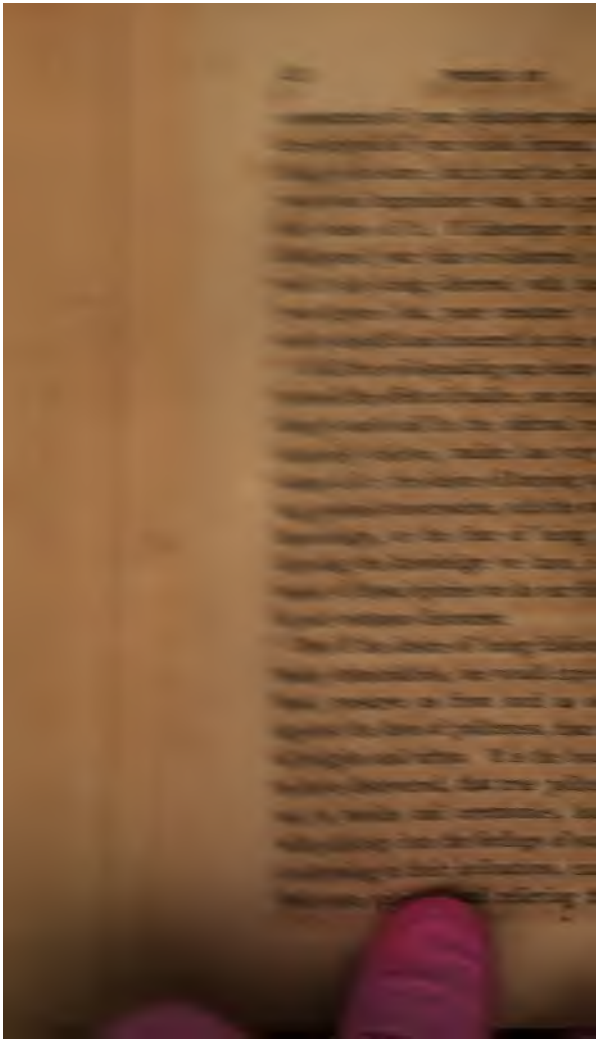
Nothing is to me more disgusting than that air of mildness and benevolence with which some ill-natured observation on the person or dress of our absent acquaintance, or some sly sarcasm, designed to obscure the brightest part of their character, is usually introduced. If the defects of a lady's person are to be held forth to ridicule, it is first remarked, that "she is certainly the best kind of woman in the world." If one of distinguished talents is to be the victim, those talents are magnified and exalted in the strongest terms, and then in a lower voice you are called upon to take notice of the conscious superiority of her manner, the ostentatious display of her knowl-

edge, or the pointed affectation of her wit. Some absurd saying, which envy had invented for her, is produced as a sample of her *bons mots*, and some trait of impertinence, though perhaps the most contrary to her character, related as a specimen of her behaviour. When the lady ***'s have been extolled for their charity and goodness, I have heard it added, "that it is impossible to pass through their hall without terrible consequences, 'tis so full of company from Broad St Giles's. Mrs. **** is confessedly the most pious creature upon earth! poor soul! she was carried to church in an ague-fit last Sunday; for she thinks there is no going to heaven without hearing Mr. *Such-a-one* preach once a week." Thus, by the help of exaggeration, you may possibly succeed in raising a sneer against a plain person, or a bright understanding; against christian beneficence, or rational piety; but as you profess the highest esteem for the characters you ridicule, nobody must say, that you are censorious or unfriendly.

Another heinous evil arises from the necessity of being *au fait*, with regard to every character and occurrence that is talked of. The word and thing called *sentiment* being exploded as perfectly ridiculous, all discussion of general topics being formal, tedious, and insufferable; and literary subjects pedantic and affected, there remains no-

thing, when you have done with public affairs and public diversions, but private anecdotes, pulling down, or gently undermining characters, sitting in judgment on those transactions, which, though of a private nature, are, by the newly established custom of the times, laid before the public, or producing fresh accounts of them from private hands. I hardly ever heard a conversation of this kind carried on for half an hour, without some flagrant instance of slander and injustice. It is amazing to observe the courage with which, upon mere common report, facts are repeated, which tend to the utter ruin of a character, and even motives confidently assigned, which it was impossible should be known. I have heard things asserted as indisputable truths, with the air of a person who was behind the curtain and knew the whole, which I have afterwards detected to have been taken on trust from the newspapers.

The heaviest misfortunes will not shelter you from censure, when the conversation takes this turn. If you have lost your dearest friend, we pity you indeed; but we cannot help observing, either that you have very little feeling, and do not grieve enough, or that you are highly blameable in feeling too much, and grieving too violently; or else that there is something very ridiculous in your manner of shewing your grief, or in some cir-



as possible from every restraint and anxiety: but how ill are these maxims observed towards those who have not yet learned the fashionable indifference and levity on serious subjects! A young person educated in religious sentiments, and warm with the love of virtue, when first admitted into the circles of persons of character, thinks he cannot better recommend himself, than by taking some opportunity of expressing the sentiments he has been taught to revere: but how is he shocked and mortified, to find himself stared at and ridiculed, his gravity answered with contemptuous smiles, or received with a general silence, the distressful effect of which can only be conceived by those who have felt it! Sunk into the deepest confusion on finding himself so much too wise and good for his company, he soon determines no more to offend on that side: but would any of the most troublesome formalities of former ages have cost him a pain equal to this unmerited shame, or the constraint he must suffer in disguising his sentiments, and inuring himself to the ridicule and contempt of what he had been used to hold most sacred? The present pain inflicted on him is a cruel outrage on good manners; but the consequences of it are far more injurious. Such an attack on a young man's sensibility is but too generally followed by the sacrifice of virtue to fashion; and he gradually adopts

cumstances of your behaviour under it. If you are stripped of your whole fortune, 'tis a terrible thing to be sure; but it can't be dissembled, that your own imprudence was, in a great measure, the cause of it. If distemper or accident has disfigured your face or distorted your limbs, we can't help being diverted with the oddness of your figure; but, poor creature! we are excessively shock'd and concern'd at the same time.

If all the evil-speaking one hears was to be esteemed the effect of malice, one might sometimes fancy's one's self in the infernal regions; but I sincerely believe, malice has very seldom any share in it: the desire of keeping up or enlivening genteel conversation, with the want of rational knowledge, or the fear of being ridiculed for shewing the knowledge we have, is the general cause of those injuries we do our fellow creatures in our common discourse.

But if the desire of being fashionable leads to many immoralities, one would expect it should at least preserve us from such as offend no less against the laws of politeness, than against those of religion and virtue. It is the boast of this age to have discovered, that true politeness consists, not in modes and ceremonies, but in entering with delicacy into the feelings of our companions, conforming to their inclinations, exalting them in their own opinions, and relieving them as much

as possible from every restraint and anxiety: but how ill are these maxims observed towards those who have not yet learned the fashionable indifference and levity on serious subjects! A young person educated in religious sentiments, and warm with the love of virtue, when first admitted into the circles of persons of character, thinks he cannot better recommend himself, than by taking some opportunity of expressing the sentiments he has been taught to revere: but how is he shocked and mortified, to find himself stared at and ridiculed, his gravity answered with contemptuous smiles, or received with a general silence, the distressful effect of which can only be conceived by those who have felt it! Sunk into the deepest confusion on finding himself so much too wise and good for his company, he soon determines no more to offend on that side: but would any of the most troublesome formalities of former ages have cost him a pain equal to this unmerited shame, or the constraint he must suffer in disguising his sentiments, and inuring himself to the ridicule and contempt of what he had been used to hold most sacred? The present pain inflicted on him is a cruel outrage on good manners; but the consequences of it are far more injurious. Such an attack on a young man's sensibility is but too generally followed by the sacrifice of virtue to fashion; and he gradually adopts

an air of disdain for all that should preserve him from corruption and ruin.

Refinement of sentiment in a young lady too often meets with a like fate. She has not the courage to assume a superior elegance of mind to those she converses with, who would only laugh at her pretensions; she must therefore, on pain of being treated as a romance heroine, learn to debase the pure lustre of virgin delicacy and refined sensibility; she must adopt the worldly notions, and the free, not to say licentious, manners of those who have already trod the round of public diversions, and have been hackneyed in the ways of the gay world; till from copying their external behaviour, she gradually reduces her mind to the same standard, and brings down every high thought, every delicate and ingenuous sentiment, with which books and education had inspired her, to the *ton* of unfeeling dissipation.

Nor can we wonder that the modest timidity of youth should be thus borne down by the imposing air of the world, when we see that it has but too strong an effect even on well-principled and long-practised virtue. I believe I may appeal to the bosom of almost every man of religious principles, whose situation has obliged him to converse much with the world, whether he has not found it one of his hardest trials, to stem the torrent of custom, and [illegible] the ridicule which awaits the tes-

timony he is bound to give in the cause of religion and virtue. Has he never been tempted to suppress that testimony, and to incur the danger of countenancing, by not opposing, contrary notions, rather than expose himself to suffer, or be obliged to resent, the contempt of those who esteemed themselves polite company; and who were really too well bred to have ridiculed his mistress, friend, or relation in his presence, though they could allow themselves to insult him on points still more interesting?

But, without formally attacking principles, the general tendency of conversation must conduce either to weaken or establish them. The more remote the cause is from the effect, the less are we on our guard against it; and the slowest method is perhaps the surest, to undermine religion and morality.

When we are told by our great Master, that "of every idle word we must give an account at the day of judgment," it is not to be imagined that he meant to confine our common conversation to serious and important subjects, or to condemn that innocent trifling, which necessarily makes so large a part of our communication with each other: he says not, that every idle word shall be accounted a fault, but only that an account must be given of it; that it shall be examined as to the tendency of it, whether it be good

or bad, and as such be placed to the account of our good or evil conduct; for there is no part of our conversation so insignificant, as not to be tinctured, in some degree, by our principles and dispositions: none that has not some remote influence on the cause of virtue.

True religion gives an habitual sweetness and complacency, which produces genuine politeness, without injury to sincerity: it preserves the mind from every unfair bias, and inclines it to temper justice with mercy in all its judgments upon others: by regulating our self-love, it prevents our sacrificing to vanity the good fame of a fellow creature: it casts a pleasing light on every object, and inspires an air of contentment, of thankfulness and joy, which raises the spirits and promotes such an innocent cheerfulness of conversation, as may well compensate for the loss of that mirth which is founded on ill nature: whilst superstition and irreligion equally dispose the mind to gloomy and uncomfortable views; to think hardly of persons and events; to consider life as a scene of confusion, and mankind as made up of fools and knaves, who prey on each other, and aggravate the common load of misery. Under these melancholy impressions, men contrive, by attributing the best actions to selfish motives, to level all distinctions of character, and conclude the whole race under one dreadful sentence; a

race which the superstitious man considers as under the wrath of its Maker, and as the proper subject of never-ending misery; while the infidel sees it under the less horrible, but dark and hopeless doom of annihilation: *he* perceives not a beneficent hand over-ruling the seeming disorders of this world, nor does his faint eye reach the distant prospect of immortal glory, which throws such an animating splendour on the whole scene of existence: his blessings are not heightened by gratitude, nor his sufferings mitigated by resignation; even his mirth is infected with bitterness. Whilst we laugh with Voltaire at the most heightened representation of human wickedness and misery, disregarded by Heaven, and terminating in eternal darkness, surely we must forget, that we also are men, and that this shocking scene is the poor all of existence which his gloomy philosophy allots us.

The different views of things which arise from different opinions concerning the moral government of the world, and the end of our being, cannot but affect the general tenor of conversation even on indifferent topics: a man may shew the bent of his mind in talking of a comedy or a piece of news; and the turn of thought he will introduce from these subjects will tend either to the improvement or corruption of his hearers.

If we accustom ourselves to reflect on the consequences of our words, and if we live under a sense of the duty of doing good to our fellow creatures, and of forbearing to hurt them in any manner or degree, we shall soon find to how great a sum of good or evil our daily expense of idle words may amount. When we are considering what are the means of doing good intrusted to us, perhaps the sphere of conversation is seldom thought of; yet surely it gives ample scope for the exertion of that active principle of beneficence in which true virtue consists; and it is a sphere of action, from which no station or circumstances can exclude us: there is not a man who drinks his pot of porter at the alehouse, but has somebody who looks up to his opinion, and whose manners and conduct may be influenced by his sentiments: how much then may be done by those whose understandings are held in any estimation among their acquaintance! "A word spoken in season, how good is it!" what a deep and lasting impression does it sometimes make! especially from the lips of those whose rank, abilities, or attractions give them particular consideration. On the other hand, what diffusive evil may take its rise from a slighting word, or even from a shrug, or a smile!

A man of my acquaintance has ass ver received so much be-

nefit from any sermon he ever heard, as from a reproof which he once received in conversation from a lady, who, when he had been talking on some subject rather licentiously, said "it is a sign you did not overhear what lord L—— said of you yesterday, or you would never utter such sentiments." The gentleman, when he told it to me, added, "Whoever could be insensible to the keenness of this reproof, and the flattering politeness with which it was tempered, must be flayed (as they say of a Russian) before he could be made to feel." Its influence on him has probably continued to this day; for I never knew him give occasion for another reproof of the same nature.

The great and irresistible influence, which the choice of our company, as well as the mode of our own conversation, has on our habits of thinking and acting, and on the whole form and colour of our minds, is a subject too common to be much enlarged upon; it cannot, however, be too deeply considered, as it seems the leading circumstance of our lives, and that which may chiefly determine our character and condition to all eternity.

ESSAY III.

ON ENTHUSIASM, AND INDIFFERENCE IN RELIGION.

It is an old observation, that nothing is so difficult as to preserve the human affections in the due medium between opposite extremes. This is so remarkably true in our religious sentiments, that whoever examines his own heart will probably be convinced, that, in every part of his life, he has been led too far, either towards enthusiasm or indifference.

I remember that when I was about fifteen years old, I was charmed with many of the doctrines of the Mystics. *Disinterested love of God, contempt of ourselves,* and *indifference towards our own happiness,* appeared to me essential to the true spirit of religion; and such refinements on human nature were highly gratifying to my romantic turn of mind. I fancied myself exalted by these ideas to a high degree of perfection, and lamented and despised the unhappy state in which I had been before I became acquainted with these sublime religionists. But, as my reason gained strength, I discovered that there was no more reality in these my fancied sentiments than in my dreams, and that the sensations I had produced in my own heart were as entirely the effect of imagination, as the distress I felt in seeing a tragedy.

This self-delusion is common enough in many of the operations of our own minds, but perhaps in none more than in the ardours of devotion; which are often no other than the workings of a heated fancy, that, in a kind of frenzy, adds an unnatural force to our sentiments, and makes us undertake flights, of which human nature in its sober state is incapable.

It is true, that we cannot possibly exceed in the measure of our love to God, to whom reason, as well as revelation, directs us to offer the best of our affections, and from whom alone we can hope for that happiness which it is our nature incessantly to desire. But we may fancy that we love him more than we *do* or *can*; and measure that love, not by the rule himself has given us; by our obedience, and by our love to our fellow creatures; but by the strength of those factitious feelings which we have the art of raising in ourselves, and which can naturally be excited only by the senses or the imagination. God cannot be the proper object of such feelings, since he is not present either to our senses or our imaginations. Of him we can have no idea, since all our ideas are introduced by our senses. We do indeed discover, by the deductions of reason, that there must be one self-existant Being possessing all perfection: we therefore accumulate all the good we are acquainted with, ascribing it to the Deity, with no

other addition than the negation of all limits or imperfection. This we call an idea of God; but it is not properly such, for we are incapable of representing to our minds at once all possible excellences, with infinity added to them. When we would contemplate the Supreme Being, we must trace his attributes one by one; and even thus we must gather from mere mortal things, our notions of those attributes. He is therefore the object and choice of our reason, rather than of our passions: and our contemplations of his divine perfections are rather fitted to produce sentiments of gratitude and reverential love, like those we feel towards a worthy parent, than such strong desires and flaming raptures as the Mystics describe; who borrow their expressions from the most sensual kind of love. This *love of desire*, as they distinguish it, they would appropriate solely to the purest of all spirits, and leave for sensible objects only calm benevolence. Thus they undertake to change the nature our Maker has given us. They reject the title he has vouchsafed to take upon himself, of our *father*, and choose to style him their *spouse*, their *lover*. They profess to *feast* and *inebriate* themselves with his *charms*, whom they "neither have seen, nor can see," and of whom they can have no real idea; and to shut their hearts against the attractions of all sensible objects.

They even undertake a kind of separation from themselves: they talk of self-annihilation, self-hatred, of being able to will their own eternal misery, if it should please God to will it! in short, they enchant themselves with words void of meaning, and with suppositions which a sound mind is incapable of admitting for a moment.

That the excellent Fenelon should have adopted such irrational expressions, would be inconceivable, if we did not know that the richness and strength of such an imagination, and the warmth of such a heart as his, will naturally prevail over reason, and hurry a man into the regions of extravagance, whenever his favourite object is in view.

But whatever absurdities may arise from the fancied ardours of enthusiasm, they are much less pernicious to the mind than the contrary extreme of coldness and indifference in religion. The spirit of chivalry, though it led to many romantic enterprises, was nevertheless favourable to true courage, as it excited and nourished magnanimity and contempt of danger; which, though sometimes wasted in absurd undertakings, were of the greatest use on real and proper occasions. The noblest energies of which we are capable can scarcely be called out without some degree of enthusiasm, in whatever cause we are engaged; and those sentiments, which tend to the exaltation

of human nature, though they may often excite attempts beyond the human powers, will however prevent our stopping short of them, and losing, by careless indolence and self-desertion, the greatest part of that strength with which we really are endued.

How common is it for those who profess (and perhaps sincerely) to believe with entire persuasion the truth of the gospel, to declare that they do not *pretend* to frame their lives according to the purity of its moral precepts! "I hope," say they, "I am guilty of no *great crimes*; but the customs of the world in these times will not admit of a conduct agreeable either to reason or revelation. I know the course of life I am in is wrong; I know that I am engrossed by the world; that I have no time for reflection, nor for the practice of many duties which I acknowledge to be such. But I know not how it is; I do not find that I *can* alter my manner of living." Thus they coolly and contentedly give themselves up to a constant course of dissipation, and a general *worthlessness* of character, which, I fear, is as little favourable to their happiness here or hereafter, as the occa-

mmission of crimes at which they would tremble. The habitual neglect of all et valuable and important, of children, of neighbours and dependants, , and of their own minds, they

consider as an excusable levity, and satisfy themselves with laying the blame on the manners of the times.

If a modern lady of fashion was to be called to account for the disposition of her time, I imagine her defence would run in this style: "I can't, you know, be out of the world, nor act differently from every body in it. The hours are every where late, consequently I rise late. I have scarce breakfasted before morning visits begin, or 'tis time to go to an auction, or a concert; or to take a little exercise for my health. Dressing my hair is a long operation; but one *can't* appear with a head unlike every body else. One *must* sometimes go to a play, or an opera; though I own it hurries one to death. Then what with necessary visits, the perpetual engagements to card parties at private houses; and attendance on the public assemblies, to which all people of fashion subscribe, the evenings you see are fully disposed of. What time then can I possibly have for what you call domestic duties? You talk of the offices and enjoyments of friendship; alas! I have no hours left for friends! I must see them in a crowd, or not at all. As to cultivating the friendship of my husband, we are very civil when we meet; but we are both too much engag- spend much time with each other. With to my daughters, I have given them a

governess, and proper masters—I can do no more for them. You tell me, I should instruct my servants, but I have not time to inform *myself*, much less can I undertake any thing of that sort for *them*, or even be able to guess what they do with themselves the greatest part of the twenty-four hours. I go to church, if possible, once on a Sunday, and then some of my servants attend me; and if they will not mind what the preacher says, how can I help it? The management of our fortune, as far as I am concerned, I *must* leave to the steward and housekeeper; for I find I can barely snatch a quarter of an hour just to look over the bill of fare when I am to have company, that they may not send up any thing frightful or old fashioned. As to the christian duty of charity, I assure you I am not ill-natured; and (considering that the great expense of being always dressed for company, with losses at cards, subscriptions, and public spectacles, leave me very little to dispose of) I am ready enough to give my money when I meet with a miserable object. You say, I should inquire out such, inform myself thoroughly of their cases, make an acquaintance with the poor of my neighbourhood in the country, and plan out the best methods of relieving the unfortunate, and assisting the industrious. But this supposes much more time and much more money than I have to [illegible] and hopes indeed that my sum-

mers would have afforded me more leisure; but we stay pretty late in town; then we generally pass several weeks at one or other of the water-drinking places, where every moment is spent in public; and, for the few months in which we reside at our own seat, our house is always full, with a succession of company, to whose amusement one is obliged to dedicate every hour of the day."

So here ends the account of that time which was given you to prepare and educate yourself for eternity? yet you believe the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments. Ask your own heart what rewards you deserve, or what kind of felicity you are fitted to enjoy? Which of those faculties or affections, which heaven can be supposed to gratify, have you cultivated and improved? If, in that eternal world, the stores of *knowledge* should be laid open before you, have you preserved that thirst of knowledge, or that taste for truth, which is now to be indulged with endless information? If, in the society of saints and angels, the purest benevolence and most cordial *love* is to constitute your happiness, where is the heart that should enjoy this delightful intercourse of affection? Has yours been exercised and refined to a proper capacity of it during your state of discipline, by the energies of generous friendship, by the meltings of

parental fondness, or by that union of heart and soul, that mixed exertion of perfect friendship and ineffable tenderness, which approaches nearest to the full satisfaction of our nature, in the bands of conjugal love? Alas! you scarce knew you had a heart, except when you feel it swell with pride, or flutter with vanity. Has your piety and gratitude to the Source of all good been exercised and strengthened by constant acts of praise and thanksgiving? Was it nourished by frequent meditation, and silent recollection of all the wonders he hath done for us, till it burst forth in fervent prayer? I fear it was rather decency than devotion that carried you once a week to the place of public worship, and, for the rest of the week, your thoughts and time were so very differently filled up, that the idea of a Ruler of the Universe could occur but seldom, and then, rather as an object of terror than of hope and joy. How then shall a soul so dead to divine love, so lost to all but the most childish pursuits, be able to exalt and enlarge itself to a capacity of that bliss which we are allowed to hope for, in a more intimate ception of the divine presence, in contemplat- more nearly the perfections of our Creator, in pouring out before his throne our ardent titude, love, and adoration? What kind of ring is the life you have ... for such an imme...

And dare you look down with contempt on those whom strong temptation from natural passions, or a train of unfortunate circumstances, have sunk into the commission of what you call great *crimes?* Dare you speak peace to your own heart, because by different circumstances you have been preserved from them? Far be it from me to wish to lessen the horror of crimes: but yet, as the temptations to these occur but seldom, whereas the temptations to neglect, and indifference towards our duty for ever surround us, it may be necessary to awaken ourselves to some calculation of the proportions between such habitual *omission* of all that is good, and the *commission* of more heinous acts of sin; between wasting our whole life in what is falsely called *innocent amusement*, and disgracing it by faults which would alarm society more, though possibly they might injure it less.

How amazing is the distance between the extreme of negligence and self indulgence in such nominal christians, and the opposite excess of rigour which some have unhappily thought meritorious! between a Pascal (who dreaded the influence of pleasure so much, as to wear an iron, which he pressed into his side whenever he found himself taking delight in any object of sense) and those who think life lent them only to be squan-

nseless diversions, and the frivolous

indulgence of vanity! what a strange composition is man! ever diverging from the right line, forgetting the true end of his being, or widely mistaking the means that lead to it!

If it were indeed true, that the Supreme Being had made it the condition of our future happiness, that we should spend the days of our pilgrimage here on earth in voluntary suffering and mortification, and a continual opposition to every inclination of nature, it would surely be worth while to conform even to these conditions, however rigorous: and we see, by numerous examples, that it is not more than human creatures are capable of, when fully persuaded that their eternal interests demand it. But if, in fact, the laws of God are no other than directions for the better enjoyment of our existence; if he has forbid us nothing that is not pernicious, and commanded nothing that is not highly advantageous to us; if, like a beneficent parent, he inflicts neither punishment nor constraint unnecessarily, but makes our good the end of all his injunctions, it will then appear much more extraordinary that we should perversely go on in constant and acknowledged neglect of those injunctions.

Is there a single pleasure worthy of a rational being, which is not, within certain limitations, consistent with religion and virtue? And are not the limits, within which we are permitted to enjoy

them, the same which are prescribed by reason and nature, and which we cannot exceed without manifest hurt to ourselves, or others? It is not the life of a hermit, or a *Père de la Trappe*, that is enjoined us: it is only the life of a rational being, formed for society, capable of continual improvement, and consequently of continual advancement in happiness.

Sir Charles and Lady Worthy are neither gloomy ascetics nor frantic enthusiasts. They married from affection founded on long acquaintance and perfect esteem. They therefore enjoy the best pleasures of the heart in the highest degree. They concur in a rational scheme of life, which, whilst it makes them always cheerful and happy, renders them the friends of human kind, and the blessing of all around them. They do not desert their station in the world, nor deny themselves the proper and moderate use of their large fortune; though that portion of it which is appropriated to the use of others, is that from which they derive their highest gratifications. They spend four or five months of every year in London, where they keep up an intercourse of hospitality and civility with many of the most respectable persons of their own, or of higher rank; but have endeavoured rather at a select than a numerous acquaintance; and as they never play at cards, this endeavour has the more easily

ceeded. Three days in the week, from the hour of dinner, are given up to this intercourse with what may be called *the world*. Three more are spent in a family way, with a few intimate friends, whose tastes are conformable to their own, and with whom the book and working-table, or sometimes music, supply the intervals of useful and agreeable conversation. In these parties their children are always present, and partake of the improvement that arises from such society, or from the well chosen pieces which are read aloud. The seventh day is always spent at home, after the due attendance on public worship; and is peculiarly appropriated to the religious instruction of their children and servants, or to other works of charity. As they keep regular hours, and rise early, and as Lady Worthy never pays or admits morning visits, they have seven or eight hours in every day free from all interruption from the world, in which the cultivation of their own minds, and those of their children, the due attention to health, to economy, and to the poor, are carried on in the most regular manner.

Thus, even in London, they contrive, without the appearance of quarrelling with the world, or of shutting themselves up from it, to pass the greatest part of their time in a reasonable and useful, as well as an agreeable manner. The rest

year they spend at their family seat in the

country, where the happy effects of their example, and of their assiduous attention to the good of all around them, are still more observable than in town. Their neighbours, their tenants, and the poor, for many miles about them, find in them a sure resource and comfort in calamity, and a ready assistant to every scheme of honest industry. The young are instructed at their expense, and under their direction, and rendered useful at the earliest period possible; the aged and the sick have every comfort administered that their state requires; the idle and dissolute are kept in awe by vigilant inspection; the quarrelsome are brought, by a sense of their own interest, to live more quietly with their family and neighbours, and amicably to refer their disputes to Sir Charles's decision.

This amiable pair are not less highly prized by the genteel families of their neighbourhood, who are sure of finding in their house the most polite and cheerful hospitality, and in them a fund of good sense and good humour, with a constant disposition to promote every innocent pleasure. They are particularly the delight of all the young people, who consider them as their patrons, and their oracles, to whom they always apply for advice and assistance in any kind of distress, or in any scheme of amusement.

Sir Charles and Lady Worthy are seldom without some friends in the house with them during

their stay in the country; but, as their methods are known, they are never broken in upon by their guests, who do not expect to see them till dinner-time, except at the hour of prayer and of breakfast. In their private walks or rides, they usually visit the cottages of the labouring poor, with all of whom they are personally acquainted; and by the sweetness and friendliness of their manner, as well as by their beneficent actions, they so entirely possess the hearts of these people, that they are made the confidants of all their family grievances, and the casuists to settle all their scruples of conscience or difficulties in conduct. By this method of conversing freely with them, they find out their different characters and capacities, and often discover and apply to their own benefit, as well as that of the person they distinguish, talents, which would otherwise have been for ever lost to the public.

From this slight sketch of their manner of living, can it be thought that the practice of virtue costs them any great sacrifices? Do they appear to be the servants of a hard master? It is true, they have not the amusement of gaming, nor do they curse themselves in bitterness of soul, for
ng the fortune Providence had bestowed upon
: they are not continually in public places,
ifled in crowded assemblies; nor are their
consumed in an insipid interchange of un-

meaning chat with hundreds of fine people who are perfectly indifferent to them; but then, in return, the Being whom they serve indulges them in the best pleasures of love, of friendship, of parental and family affection, of divine beneficence, and of a piety, which chiefly consists in joyful acts of love and praise! not to mention the delights they derive from a taste uncorrupted and still alive to natural pleasures; from the beauties of nature, and from cultivating those beauties joined with utility in the scenes around them; and, above all, from that flow of spirits, which a life of activity, and the constant exertion of right affections naturally produce. Compare their countenances with those of the wretched slaves of *the world*, who are hourly complaining of fatigue, of listlessness, distaste, and vapours; and who, with faded cheeks and worn-out constitutions, still continue to haunt the scenes where once their vanity found gratification, but where they now meet only with mortification and disgust: then tell me which has chosen the happier plan, admitting for a moment that no future penalty was annexed to a wrong choice? Listen to the character that is given of Sir Charles Worthy and his lady, wherever they are named, and then tell me, whether even your idol, *the world*, is not more favourable to them than to you?

Perhaps it is vain to think of recalling those whom long habits, and the established tyranny of pride and vanity, have almost precluded from a possibility of imitating such patterns, and in whom the very desire of amendment is extinguished: but for those who are now entering on the stage of life, and who have their parts to choose, how earnestly could I wish for the spirit of persuasion, for such a "warning voice" as should make itself heard amidst all the gay bustle that surrounds them! it should cry to them without ceasing, not to be led away by the crowd of fools, without knowing whither they are going; not to exchange real happiness for the empty name of pleasure; not to prefer fashion to immortality; and not to fancy it possible for them to be innocent, and at the same time useless.

A LETTER

TO THE ADVENTURER.

THE STORY OF FIDELIA.*

.....*Peccare docentes*
Fallax historias monet. Hor.

To tint th' attentive mind she tries
With tales of exemplary vice.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR,

I SHALL make no apology for the trouble I am about to give you, since I am sure the motives that induce me to give it will have as much weight with you as they have with me: I shall therefore, without further preface, relate to you the events of a life, which, however insignificant and unentertaining, affords a lesson of the highest importance; a lesson, the value of which I have experienced, and may therefore recommend.

I am the daughter of a gentleman of good family, who, as he was a younger brother, purchased, with the portion that was allotted him, a genteel post under the government. My mother

* The story of Fidelia made its first appearance in the Adventurer, Numbers 77, 78, 79.

died when I was but twelve years old; and my father, who was excessively fond of me, determined to be himself my preceptor, and to take care that my natural genius, which his partiality made him think above the common rank, should not want the improvements of a liberal education.

He was a man of sense, with a tolerable share of learning. In his youth he had been a free liver, and perhaps for that reason took some pains to become what is called a free-thinker. But whatever fashionable frailties he might formerly have allowed in himself, he was now in advanced life, and had at least worldly wisdom enough to know, that it was necessary his daughter should be restrained from those liberties, which he had looked upon as trifling errors in his own conduct. He, therefore, laboured with great application to inculcate in me the love of order, the beauty of moral rectitude, and the happiness and self-reward of virtue; but at the same time professed it his design to free my mind from vulgar prejudices and superstition, for so he called REVEALED RELIGION. As I was urged to choose virtue, and reject vice, from motives which had no necessary connexion with immortality, I was not led to consider a future state either with hope or fear: my father, indeed, when I urged him upon that subject, always intimated that the doctrine of immortality, whether true or false, ought not at all

to influence my conduct or interrupt my peace; because the virtue which secured happiness in the present state, would also secure it in a future: a future state, therefore, I wholly disregarded, and, to confess a truth, disbelieved: for I thought I could plainly discover that it was disbelieved by my father, though he had not thought fit explicitly to declare his sentiments. As I had no very turbulent passions, a ductile and good disposition, and the highest reverence for his understanding, as well as the tenderest affection for him, he found it an easy task to make me adopt every sentiment and opinion which he proposed to me as his own; especially as he took care to support his principles by the authority and arguments of the best writers against CHRISTIANITY. At the age of twenty, I was called upon to make use of all the philosophy I had been taught, by his death; which not only deprived me of a parent I most ardently loved, but with him of all the ease and affluence to which I had been accustomed. His income was only for life, and he had rather lived beyond than within it; consequently, there was nothing left for me but the pride and helplessness of genteel life, a taste for every thing elegant, and a delicacy and sensibility that has doubled all my sufferings. In this distress a brother of my mother's, who was grown rich in trade, received me into his house, and declared he would take th

same care of me as if I had been his own child. When the first transports of my grief were abated, I found myself in an easy situation, and, from the natural cheerfulness of my temper, I was beginning once more to taste of happiness. My uncle, who was a man of a narrow understanding and illiberal education, was a little disgusted with me for employing so much of my time in reading; but still more so, when, happening to examine my books, he found by the titles that some of them were what he called blasphemy, and tended, as he imagined, to make me an atheist. I endeavoured to explain my principles, which I thought it beneath the dignity of virtue to disguise or disavow; but as I never could make him conceive any difference between a Deist and an Atheist, my arguments only served to confirm him in the opinion, that I was a wicked wretch, who, in his own phrase, believe neither God nor devil. As he was really a good man, and heartily zealous for the established faith, though more from habit and prejudice than reason, my errors gave him great affliction: I perceived it with the utmost concern; I perceived, too, that he looked upon me with a degree of abhorrence mixed with pity, and that I was wholly indebted to his good nature for that protection which I had flattered myself I should owe to his love. I comforted myself, however, with my own integrity, and even felt a conscious

pride in suffering this persecution from ignorance and folly, only because I was superior to vulgar errors and popular superstition; and that CHRISTIANITY deserved these appellations, I was not more convinced by my father's arguments than my uncle's conduct, who, as his zeal was not according to knowledge, was by no means qualified to "adorn the doctrine" which he professed to believe.

I had lived a few months under the painful sensibility of receiving continual benefits from a person whose esteem and affection I had lost, when my uncle one day came into my chamber, and after preparing me for some unexpected good fortune, told me, he had just had a proposal of marriage for me from a man to whom I could not possibly have any objection. He then named a merchant, with whom I had often been in company at his table. As the man was neither old nor ugly, had a large fortune, and a fair character, my uncle thought himself sufficiently authorized to pronounce as he did, that I could not possibly have any objection to him. An objection, however, I had, which I told my uncle was to me insuperable; it was, that the person whom he proposed to me as the companion, the guide and director of my whole life, to whom I was to vow not only obedience but love, had nothing in him that could ever engage my affection: his understand-

ing was low, his sentiments mean and indelicate, and his manner unpolite and unpleasing. "What stuff is all this!" interrupted my uncle, "sentiments indelicate! unpolite! his understanding, forsooth, not equal to your own! Ah, child, if you had less romance, conceit, and arrogance, and more true discretion and prudence, it would do you more good than all the fine books you have confounded your poor head with, and what is worse, perhaps, ruined your poor soul. I own, it went a little against my conscience to accept my honest friend's kind offer, and give him such a pagan for his wife. But how know I whether the believing husband may not convert the unbelieving wife? As to your flighty objections, they are such nonsense, that I wonder you can suppose me fool enough to be deceived by them. No, child; wise as you are, you cannot impose upon a man who has lived as many years in the world as I have. I see your motive; you have some infidel libertine rake in your eye, with whom you would go headlong to perdition. But I shall take care not to have your soul to answer for as well as your person. Either I shall dispose of you to an honest man that may convert you, or you shall dispose of yourself how you please for me; for I disclaim all further care or trouble about you: so I leave

sider, whether or no the kindness I

entitles me to some little influ-

-ence over you, and whether you choose to seek protection where you can find it, or accept of the happy lot Providence has cut out for you."

He left me at the close of this fine harrangue, and I seriously set myself to consider, as he bade me, which of the two states he had set before me I ought to choose; to submit to a legal sort of prostitution, with the additional weight of perjury on my conscience, or to expose myself to all the distresses of friendless poverty and unprotected youth. After some hours of deliberation, I determined on the latter, and that more from principle than inclination; for though my delicacy would have suffered extremely in accepting a husband, at least indifferent to me; yet as my heart was perfectly disengaged, and my temper naturally easy, I thought I could have been less unhappy in following my uncle's advice, than I might probably be by rejecting it: but then I must have submitted to an action I could not think justifiable, in order to avoid mere external distresses. This would not have been philosophical. I had always been taught, that virtue was of itself sufficient to happiness: and that those things which are generally esteemed evils, could have no power to disturb the felicity of a mind governed by the eternal rule of right, and truly enamoured of the charms of moral beauty. I resolved, therefore, to run all risques, rather than depart from this gl-

rious principle; I felt myself raised by the trial, and exulted in the opportunity of shewing my contempt of the smiles or frowns of fortune, and of proving the power of virtue to sustain the soul under all accidental circumstances of distress.

I communicated my resolution to my uncle, assuring him at the same time of my everlasting gratitude and respect, and that nothing should have induced me to offend or disobey him, but his requiring me to do what my reason and conscience disapproved; that supposing the advantages of riches to be really as great as he believed, yet still those of virtue were greater, and I could not resolve to purchase the one by a violation of the other; that a false vow was certainly criminal; and that it would be doing an act of the highest injustice, to enter into so solemn an engagement without the power of fulfilling it; that my affections did not depend on my own will; and that no man should possess my person, who could not obtain the first place in my heart.

I was surprised that my uncle's impatience had permitted me to go on thus far; but looking in his face, I perceived that passion had kept him silent. At length the gathering storm burst over my head in a torrent of reproaches. My reasons were condemned as romantic absurdities, which I could not myself believe; I was accused of designing to deceive, and to throw myself away on some worth-

ess fellow, whose principles were as bad as my own. It was in vain for me to assert that I had no such design, nor any inclination to marry at all; my uncle could sooner have believed the grossest contradiction, than that a young woman could so strenuously refuse one man without being prepossessed in favour of another. As I thought myself injured by his accusations and tyranny, I gave over the attempt to mitigate his anger. He appealed to Heaven for the justice of his resentment, and against my ingratitude and rebellion; and then giving me a note of fifty pounds, which he said would keep me from immediate indigence, he bade me leave his house, and see his face no more. I bowed in sign of obedience; and collecting all my dignity and resolution, I arose, thanked him for his past benefits, and with a low courtesy left the room.

In less than an hour I departed with my little wardrobe to the house of a person who had formerly been my father's servant, and who now kept a shop and let lodgings. From hence I went the next day to visit my father's nephew, who was in possession of the family estate, and had lately married a lady of great fortune. He was a young gentleman of good parts, his principles the same as my father's, though his practice had not been quite agreeable to the strict rules of morality: however, setting aside a few of those vices which are

looked upon as genteel accomplishments in young fellows of fortune, I thought him a good sort of man; and as we had always lived in great kindness, I doubted not that I should find him my friend, and meet with approbation and encouragement at least, if not assistance from him. I told him my story, and the reasons that had determined me to the refusal which had incurred my uncle's displeasure. But how was I disappointed, when, instead of the applause I expected for my heroic virtue, and unmerited persecutions, I perceived a smile of contempt on his face, when he interrupted me in the following manner! "And what, in the devil's name, my dear cousin, could make a woman of your sense behave so like an idiot? What! forfeit all your hopes from your uncle, refuse an excellent match, and reduce yourself to beggary, because truly you were not in love? Surely, one might have expected better from you even at fifteen. Who is it, pray, that marries the person of their choice? For my own part, who have rather a better title to please myself, with a good fifteen hundred a year, than you who have not a shilling, I found it would not do, and that there was something more to be sought after in a wife than a pretty face or a genius. Do you think I cared three farthings for the woman I m h. But her thirty thousand ving; with that I can pur-

chase a seraglio of beauties, and indulge my taste in every kind of pleasure. And pray what is it to me whether my wife has beauty, or wit, or elegance, when her money will supply me with all that in others? You, cousin, had an opportunity of being as happy as I am: the men, believe me, would not like you a bit the worse for being married; on the contrary, you would find, that for one who took notice of you as a single woman, twenty would be your admirers and humble servants when there was no danger of being taken in. Thus you might have gratified all your passions, made an elegant figure in life, and have chosen out some gentle swain as romantic and poetical as you pleased for your Cecisbee. The good John Trott husband would have been easily managed, and——" Here my indignation could be contained no longer, and I was leaving the room in disdain; when he caught me by the hand; "Nay, prithee, my dear cousin, none of these violent airs. I thought you and I had known one another better. Let the poor souls, who are taught by the priests and their nurses to be afraid of hell-fire, and to think they shall go to the devil for following nature and making life agreeable, be as outrageously virtuous as they please: you have too much sense to be frighted at bugbears; you know that the term of our existence is but short; and it is highly reasonable to make it as pleasant as pos-

sible." I was too angry to attempt confuting his arguments; but bursting from his hold, told him, I would take care not to give him a second opportunity of insulting my distress, and affronting my understanding; and so left his house with a resolution never to enter it again.

THE STORY OF FIDELIA.

CONTINUED.

.....Propter vitam vivendi perdere causas. Juv.

Nor quit for life, what gives to life its worth.

I WENT home mortified and disappointed. My spirits sunk into a dejection, which took from me for many days all inclination to stir out of my lodging, or to see a human face. At length I resolved to try, whether indigence and friendship were really incompatible, and whether I should meet with the same treatment from a female friend, whose affection had been the principal pleasure of my youth. Surely, thought I, the gentle Amanda, whose heart seems capable of every tender and generous sentiment, will do justice to the innocence and integrity of her unfortunate friend; her tenderness will encourage my virtue and animate my fortitude, her praises and endearments will compensate all my hardships. Amanda was a single woman of a moderate independent fortune, which I heard she was going to bestow on a young officer, who had little or nothing besides his commission. I had no doubt of her approbation of my refusing a mercenary match, since she herself had chosen from motives so or

posite to those which are called prudent. She had been in the country some months, so that my misfortunes had not reached her ear till I myself related them to her. She heard me with great attention, and answered me with politeness enough, but with a coldness that chilled my very heart. "You are sensible, my dear Fidelia," said she, "that I never pretended to set my understanding in competition with yours. I knew my own inferiority; and though many of your notions and opinions appeared to me very strange and particular, I never attempted to dispute them with you. To be sure, you know best; but it seems to me a very odd conduct for one in your situation to give offence to so good an uncle; first by maintaining doctrines which may be very true for ought I know, but which are very contrary to the received opinions we are brought up in, and therefore are apt to shock a common understanding; and secondly, to renounce his protection, and throw yourself into the wide world, rather than marry the man he chose for you; to whom, after all, I do not find you had any real objection, nor any antipathy for his person." Antipathy, my dear! said I; are there not many degrees between loving and honouring a man preferably to all others, and beholding him with abhorrence and aversion? The first is, in my opinion, the duty of a wife [illegible] 'arily taken upon herself, and

engaged in under the most solemn contract. As to the difficulties that may attend my friendless, unprovided state, since they are the consequences of a virtuous action, they cannot really be evils, nor can they disturb that happiness which is the gift of virtue. "I am heartily glad," answered she, "that you have found the art of making yourself happy by the force of imagination! I wish your enthusiasm may continue; and that you may still be further convinced, by your own experience, of the folly of mankind, in supposing poverty and disgrace to be evils."

I was cut to the soul by the unkind manner which accompanied this sarcasm, and was going to remonstrate against her unfriendly treatment, when her lover came in with another gentleman, who, in spite of my full heart, engaged my attention, and for a while made me forget the stings of unkindness. The beauty and gracefulness of his person caught my eye, and the politeness of his address, and the elegance of his compliments, soon prejudiced me in favour of his understanding. He was introduced by the Captain to Amanda as his most intimate friend, and seemed desirous to give credit to his friend's judgment, by making himself as agreeable as possible. He succeeded so well, that Amanda was wholly engrossed by the pleasure of his conversation, and the care of entertaining her lover and her new guest

face brightened, and her good humour returned. When I rose to leave her, she pressed me so earnestly to stay to dinner, that I could not, without discovering how much I resented her behaviour, refuse. This, however, I should probably have done, as I was naturally disposed to shew every sentiment of my heart, had not a secret wish arisen there to know a little more of this agreeable stranger. This inclined me to think it prudent to conceal my resentment, and to accept the civilities of Amanda. The conversation grew more and more pleasing; I took my share in it, and had more than my share of the charming stranger's notice and attention. As we all grew more and more unreserved, Amanda dropt hints in the course of the conversation relating to my story, my sentiments, and unhappy situation. Sir George Freelove, for that was the young gentleman's name, listened greedily to all that was said of me, and seemed to eye me with earnest curiosity as well as admiration. We did not part till it was late, and Sir George insisted on attending me to my lodgings: I strongly refused it, not without a sensation which more properly belonged to the female than the philosopher, and which I condemned in myself as arising from dishonest pride. I could not without pain suffer the polite Sir George, upon so short an acquaintance, to discover the meanness of my abode. To avoid

this, I sent for a chair; but was confused to find that Sir George and his servants prepared to attend it on foot by way of guard: it was in vain to dispute; he himself walked before, and his servants followed it. I was covered with blushes, when, after all this parade, he handed me in at the little shop door, and took leave with as profound respect as if he had guarded me to a palace. A thousand different thoughts kept me from closing my eyes that night. The behaviour of Amanda wounded me to the soul: I found that I must look on her as no more than a common acquaintance; and that the world did not contain one person whom I could call my friend. My heart felt desolate and forlorn; I knew not what course to take for my future subsistence; the pain which my pride had just given me, convinced me that I was far from having conquered the passions of humanity, and that I should feel too sensibly all the mortifications which attend on poverty. I determined, however, to subdue this pride, and called to my assistance the examples of ancient sages and philosophers, who despised riches and honours, and felt no inconveniences from the malice of fortune. I had almost reasoned myself into a contempt for the world, and fancied myself superior to its smiles or frowns, when the idea of Sir George Freelove rushed upon my mind, and destroyed at once the whole force of my

soning. I found that however I might disregard the rest of the world, I could not be indifferent to his opinion; and the thought of being despised by him was insupportable. I recollected that my condition was extremely different from that of an old philosopher, whose rags, perhaps, were the means of gratifying his pride, by attracting the notice and respect of mankind: at least, the philosopher's schemes and wishes were very different from those which at that time were taking possession of my heart. The looks and behaviour of Sir George left me no doubt that I had made as deep an impression in his favour as he had done in mine. I could not bear to lose the ground I had gained, and to throw myself into a state below his notice. I scorned the thought of imposing on him with regard to my circumstances, in case he should really have had favourable intentions for me; yet to disgrace myself for ever in his eye, by submitting to servitude, or any low way of supporting myself, was what I could not bring myself to resolve on.

In the midst of these reflections I was surprised the next morning by a visit from Sir George. He made respectful apologies for the liberty he took; told me he had learnt, from my friend, that the unkindness and tyranny of an uncle had cast me into uneasy circumstances; and that he could not know that so much beauty and merit were so unworthily treated by fortune, without earnestly

wishing to be the instrument of doing me more justice. He entreated me to add dignity and value to his life, by making it conducive to the happiness of mine; and was going on with the most fervent offers of service, when I interrupted him by saying, that there was nothing in his power that I could with honour accept, by which my life could be made happier, but that respect which was due to me as a woman and a gentlewoman, and which ought to have prevented such offers of service from a stranger, as could only be justified by a long-experienced friendship; that I was not in a situation to receive visits, and must decline his acquaintance, which, nevertheless, in a happier part of my life, would have given me pleasure.

He now had recourse to all the arts of his sex, imputing his too great freedom to the force of his passion, protesting the most inviolable respect, and imploring on his knees, and even with tears, that I would not punish him so severely as to deny him the liberty of seeing me, and making himself more and more worthy of my esteem. My weak heart was but too much touched by his artifices, and I had only just fortitude enough to persevere in refusing his visits, and to insist on his leaving me, which at last he did; but it was after such a profusion of tenderness, prayers, and protestations, that it was some time before I

recal my reason enough to reflect on the whole of his behaviour, and on my own situation, which compared, left me but little doubt of his dishonourable views.

I determined never more to admit him to my presence, and accordingly gave orders to be denied if he came again. My reason applauded, but my heart reproached me, and heavily repined at the rigid determination of prudence. I knew that I acted rightly, and I expected that that consciousness would make me happy; but I found it otherwise; I was wretched beyond what I had ever felt or formed any idea of; I discovered that my heart was entangled in a passion which must for ever be combated, or indulged at the expense of virtue. I now considered riches as truly desirable, since they would have placed me above disgraceful attempts, and given me reasonable hopes of becoming the wife of Sir George Freelove. I was discontented and unhappy, but surprised and disappointed to find myself so, since hitherto I had no one criminal action to reproach myself with; on the contrary, my difficulties were all owing to my regard for virtue.

I resolved, however, to try still farther the power of virtue to confer happiness, to go on in my obedience to her laws, and patiently wait for the good effects of it. But I had stronger difficulties to go through than any I had yet experienced. Sir

George was too much practised in the arts of seduction to be discouraged by a first repulse: every day produced either some new attempt to see me, or a letter full of the most passionate protestations and entreaties for pardon and favour. It was in vain I gave orders that no more letters should be taken in from him; he had so many different contrivances to convey them, and directed them in hands so unlike, that I was surprised into reading them contrary to my real intentions. Every time I stirred out he was sure to be in my way, and to employ the most artful tongue that ever ensnared the heart of woman, in blinding my reason and awakening my passions.

My virtue, however, did not yet give way, but my peace of mind was utterly destroyed. Whenever I was with him, I summoned all my fortitude, and constantly repeated my commands that he should avoid me. His disobedience called for my resentment, and, in spite of my melting heart, I armed my eyes with anger, and treated him with as much disdain as I thought his unworthy designs deserved. But the moment he left me, all my resolution forsook me. I repined at my fate: I even murmured against the SOVEREIGN RULER of all things, for making me subject to passions which I could not subdue, yet must not indulge: I compared my own situation with that of my libertine cousin, whose pernicious arguments I had h

with horror and detestation, who gave the reins to every desire, whose house was the seat of plenty, mirth, and delight, whose face was ever covered with smiles, and whose heart seemed free from sorrow and care. Is not this man, said I, happier than I am? And if so, where is the worth of virtue? Have I not sacrificed to her my fortune and my friends? Do I not daily sacrifice to her my darling inclination? Yet what is the compensation she offers me? What are my prospects in this world but poverty, mortification, disappointment and grief? Every wish of my heart denied, every passion of humanity combated and hurt, though never conquered? Are these the blessings with which HEAVEN distinguishes its favourites? Can the KING OF HEAVEN want power or will to distinguish them? or does he leave his wretched creatures to be the sport of chance, the prey of wickedness and malice? Surely, no. Yet is not the condition of the virtuous often more miserable than that of the vicious? I myself have experienced that it is. I am very unhappy, and see no likelihood of my being otherwise in this world—and all beyond the grave is eternal darkness. Yet why do I say, that I have no prospect of happiness? [illegible]s not the most engaging of men offer me all [illegible]oys that love and fortune can bestow? Will [illegible]e protect me from every insult of the proud [illegible] that so[illegible] indigence? Will not his libe-

ral hand pour forth the means of every pleasure, even of that highest and truest of all pleasures, the power of relieving the sufferings of my fellow-creatures, of changing the tears of distress into tears of joy and gratitude, of communicating my own happiness to all around me? Is not this a state far preferable to that in which virtue has placed me? But what is virtue? Is not happiness the laudable pursuit of reason? Is it not then laudable to pursue it by the most probable means? Have I not been accusing PROVIDENCE of unkindness, whilst I myself only am in fault, for rejecting its offered favours? Surely, I have mistaken the path of virtue: it must be that which leads to happiness. The path which I am in is full of thorns and briars, and terminates in impenetrable darkness; but I see another that is strowed with flowers, and bright with the shunshine of prosperity: this, surely, is the path of virtue, and the road to happiness. Hither then let me turn my weary steps, nor let vain and idle prejudices fright me from felicity. It is surely impossible that I should offend GOD, by yielding to a temptation which he has given me no motive to resist. He has allotted me a short and precarious existence, and has placed before me good and evil.—What is good but pleasure? What is evil but pain? Reason and nature direct me to choose the first, and avoid the last. I sought for happ

in what is called virtue, but I found it not: shall I not try the other experiment, since I think I can hardly be more unhappy by following inclination, than I am by denying it?

Thus had my frail thoughts wandered into a wilderness of error, and thus had I almost reasoned myself out of every principle of morality, by pursuing through all their consequences the doctrines which had been taught me as rules of life and prescriptions for felicity—the talismans of TRUTH, by which I should be secured in the storms of adversity, and listen without danger to the syrens of temptation—when in the fatal hour of my presumption, sitting alone in my chamber, collecting arguments on the side of passion, almost distracted with doubts, and plunging deeper and deeper into falsehood, I saw Sir George Freelove at my feet, who had gained admittance, contrary to my orders, by corrupting my landlady. It is not necessary to describe to you his arts, or the weak efforts of that virtue which had been graciously implanted in my heart, but which I had taken impious pains to undermine by false reasoning, and which now tottered from the foundation: suffice it that I submit to the humiliation I have so well deserved, and tell you, that, in all the pride of human reason, I dared to condemn, as the effect of weakness and prejudice, the still voice of conscience, which must have warned me from

ruin; that my innocence, my honour, was the sacrifice to passion and sophistry; that my boasted philosophy, and too much flattered understanding, preserved me not from the lowest depth of infamy, which the weakest of my sex with humility and religion would have avoided.

I now experienced a new kind of wretchedness. My vile seducer tried in vain to reconcile me to the shameful life to which he had reduced me, by loading me with finery, and lavishing his fortune in procuring me pleasures which I could not taste, and pomp which seemed an insult on my disgrace. In vain did I recollect the arguments which had convinced me of the lawfulness of accepting offered pleasures, and following the dictates of inclination: the light of my understanding was darkened, but the sense of guilt was not lost. My pride and my delicacy, if, criminal as I was, I may dare to call it so, suffered the most intolerable mortification and disgust, every time I reflected on my infamous situation. Every eye seemed to upbraid me, even that of my triumphant seducer. O depth of misery! to be conscious of deserving the contempt of him I loved, and for whose sake I was become contemptible to myself.

THE STORY OF FIDELIA.

CONCLUDED.

Quisnam igitur liber? Sapiens: sibi qui imperiosus;
Quem neque pauperies, neque mors, neque vincula terrent:
Responsare cupidinibus, contemnere honores
Fortis, et in seipso totus: teres atque rotundus,
Externi ne quid valeat per læve morari. Hor.

Who then is free? The wise, who well maintains
An empire o'er himself; whom neither chains,
Nor want, nor death, with slavish fear inspire;
Who boldly answers to his warm desire;
Who can ambition's vainest gifts despise;
Firm in himself who on himself relies;
Polish'd and round who runs his proper course,
And breaks misfortune with superior force. *Francis.*

THIS was the state of my mind during a year which I passed in Sir George's house. His fondness was unabated for eight months of the time; and as I had no other object to share my attention, neither friend nor relation to call off any part of my tenderness, all the love of a heart naturally affectionate centered in him. The first dawnings of unkindness were but too visible to my watchful eyes. I had now all the torments of jealousy to endure, till a cruel certainty put an end to them. I learnt, at length, that my false lover was on the [illegible]riage with a lady of great fortune. I

immediately resolved to leave him; but could not do it without first venting my full heart in complaints and reproaches. This provoked his rage, and drew on me insolence, which though I had deserved, I had not learnt to bear. I returned, with scorn which no longer became me, all the wages of my sin, and the trappings of my shame, and left his house in the bitterest anguish of resentment and despair.

I returned to my old lodgings: but unable to bear a scene which recalled every circumstance of my undoing, ashamed to look in the face of any creature who had seen me innocent, wretched in myself, and hoping from change of place some abatement of my misery, I put myself into a post-chaise, at two in the morning, with orders to the driver to carry me as far from town as he could before the return of night, leaving it to him to choose the road.

My reason and my senses seemed benumbed and stupified during my journey. I made no reflections on what I was about, nor formed any design for my future life. When night came, my conductor would have stopped at a large town, but I bid him go on to the next village. There I alighted at a paltry inn, and dismissed my vehicle, without once considering what I was to do with myself, or why I chose that place for my abode. To say truth, I can give no account of my thoug

at this period of time: they were all confused and distracted. A short frenzy must have filled up those hours, of which my memory retains such imperfect traces. I remember only, that without having pulled of my clothes, I left the inn as soon as I saw the day, and wandered out of the village.

My unguided feet carried me to a range of willows by a river's side, where, after having walked some time, the freshness of the air revived my senses, and awakened my reason. My reason, my memory, my anguish and despair, returned together! Every circumstance of my past life was present to my mind; but most the idea of my faithless lover and my criminal love tortured my imagination, and rent my bleeding heart, which, in spite of all its guilt and all its wrongs, retained the tenderest and most ardent affection for its undoer. This unguarded affection, which was the effect of a gentle and kind nature, heightened the anguish of resentment, and completed my misery. In vain did I call off my thoughts from this gloomy retrospect, and hope to find a gleam of comfort in my future prospects. They were still more dreadful: poverty, attended by infamy and want, groaning under the cruel hand of oppression and the taunts of insolence, was before my eyes. I, who had once been the darling and the pride of indulgent parents, who had once been beloved, respected, and admired, was now the outcast of

human nature, despised and avoided by all who had ever loved me, by all whom I had most loved! hateful to myself, belonging to no one, exposed to wrongs and insults from all!

I tried to find out the cause of this dismal change, and how far I was myself the occasion of it. My conduct with respect to Sir George, though I spontaneously condemned, yet, upon recollection, I thought the arguments which produced it would justify. But as my principles could not preserve me from vice, neither could they sustain me in adversity: conscience was not to be perverted by the sophistry which had beclouded my reason. And if any, by imputing my conduct to error, should acquit me of guilt, let them remember, it is yet true, that in this uttermost distress, I was neither sustained by the consciousness of innocence, the exultation of virtue, nor the hope of reward: whether I looked backward or forward, all was confusion and anguish, distraction and despair. I accused the Supreme Being of cruelty and injustice, who, though he gave me not sufficient encouragement to resist desire, yet punished me with the consequences of indulgence. If there is a God, cried I, he must be either tyrannical and cruel, or regardless of his creatures. I will no longer endure a being which is undeservedly miserable, either from chance or design, but fly to that annihilation in which all my prospect-

terminate. Take back, said I, lifting my eyes to heaven, the hateful gift of existence, and let my dust no more be animated to suffering, and exalted to misery.

So saying, I ran to the brink of the river, and was going to plunge in, when the cry of some person very near me made me turn my eyes to see whence it came. I was accosted by an elderly clergyman, who, with looks of terror, pity, and benevolence, asked what I was about to do? At first I was sullen, and refused to answer him; but by degrees the compassion he shewed, and the tenderness with which he treated me, softened my heart, and gave vent to my tears.

"O! Madam," said he, "these are gracious signs, and unlike those which first drew my attention, and made me watch you unobserved, fearing some fatal purpose in your mind. What must be the thoughts which could make a face like yours appear the picture of horror? I was taking my morning walk, and have seen you a considerable time; sometimes stopping and wringing your hands, sometimes quickening your pace, and sometimes walking slow, with your eyes fixed on the ground, till you raised them to heaven, with looks not of supplication and piety, but rather of accusation and defiance. For pity tell me how is it that you have quarrelled with yourself, with life, nay even with HEAVEN? Recal your reason,

and your hope, and let this seasonable prevention of your fatal purpose be an earnest to you of good things to come, of GOD's mercy not yet alienated from you, and stooping from his throne to save your soul from perdition."

The tears which flowed in rivers from my eyes while he talked, gave me so much relief, that I found myself able to speak, and desirous to express my gratitude for the good man's concern for me. It was so long since I had known the joys of confidence, that I felt surprising comfort and pleasure from unburdening my heart, and telling my kind deliverer every circumstance of my story, and every thought of my distracted mind. He shuddered to hear me upraid the DIVINE PROVIDENCE; and stopping me short, told me, he would lend me to one who should preach patience to me, whilst she gave me the example of it.

As we talked he led me to his own house, and there introduced me to his wife, a middle-aged woman, pale and emaciated, but of a cheerful placid countenance, who received me with the greatest tenderness and humanity. She saw I was distressed, and her compassion was beforehand with my complaints. Her tears stood ready to accompany mine; her looks and her voice expressed the kindest concern; and her assiduous cares demonstrated that true politeness and hospitality,

which is not the effect of art but of inward benevolence. While she obliged me to take some refreshment, her husband gave her a short account of my story, and of the state in which he had found me. "This poor lady," said he, "from the fault of her education and principles, sees every thing through a gloomy medium: she accuses PROVIDENCE, and hates her existence, for those evils which are the common lot of mankind in this short state of trial. You, my dear, who are one of the greatest sufferers I have known, are best qualified to cure her of her faulty impatience; and to convince her, by your own example, that this world is not the place in which virtue is to find its reward. She thinks no one so unhappy as herself; but if she knew all that you have gone through, she would surely be sensible, that if you are happier than she, it is only because your principles are better."

"Indeed, my dear madam," said she, "that is the only advantage I have over you; but that indeed outweighs every thing else. It is now but ten days since I followed to the grave my only son, the survivor of eight children, who were all equally the objects of my fondest love. My heart is no less tender than your own, nor my affections less warm. For a whole year before the death of my last dar[illegible]ed the fatal progress of his

disease, and saw him suffer the most amazing pains. Nor was poverty, that dreaded evil to which you could not submit, wanting to my trials. Though my husband is by his profession a gentleman, his income is so small, that I and my children have often wanted necessaries: and though I had always a weakly constitution, I have helped to support my family by the labour of my own hands. At this time I am consuming by daily tortures, with a cancer which must shortly be my death. My pains, perhaps, might be mitigated by proper assistance, though nothing could preserve my life; but I have not the means to obtain that assistance." O hold, interrupted I, my soul is shocked at the enumeration of such intolerable sufferings. How is it that you support them? Why do I not see you, in despair like mine, renounce your existence, and put yourself out of the reach of torment? But above all, tell me how it is possible for you to preserve, amidst such complicated misery, that appearance of cheerfulness and serene complacency which shines so remarkably in your countenance, and animates every look and motion?

"That cheerfulness and complacency," answered the good woman, "I feel in my heart. My mind is not only serene, but often experiences the highest emotions of joy and exultation, that the brightest hopes can give." And whence, said I,

do you derive this astonishing art of extracting joy from misery, and of smiling amidst all the terrors of pain, sorrow, poverty and death? She was silent a moment; then stepping to her closet, reached a BIBLE, which she put into my hands. "See there," said she, "the volume in which I learn this art. Here I am taught, that everlasting glory is in store for all who will accept it upon the terms which INFINITE PERFECTION has prescribed; here I am promised consolation, assistance, and support from the LORD OF LIFE; and here I am assured that my transient afflictions are only meant to fit me for eternal and unspeakable happiness. This happiness is at hand. The short remainder of my life seems but a point, beyond which opens the glorious prospect of immortality. Thus encouraged, how should I be dejected? Thus supported, how should I sink? With such prospects, such assured hopes, how can I be otherwise than happy?"

While she spoke, her eyes sparkled, and her whole face seemed animated with joy. I was struck with her manner, as well as her words. Every syllable she uttered seemed to sink into my soul, so that I never can forget it. I resolved to examine a religion, which was capable of producing such effects as I could not attribute either to chance or error. The good couple pressed me

with so much unaffected kindness, to make their little parsonage my asylum till I could better dispose of myself, that I accepted their offer. Here, with the assistance of the clergyman, who is a plain, sensible, and truly pious man, I have studied the HOLY SCRIPTURES, and the evidences of their authority. But after reading them with candour and attention, I found all the extrinsic arguments of their truth superfluous. The excellency of their precepts, the consistency of their doctrines, and the glorious motives and encouragements to virtue which they propose, together with the striking example I had before my eyes of their salutary effects, left me no doubt of their divine authority.

During the time of my abode here, I have been witness to the more than heroic, the joyful, the triumphant death of the dear good woman. With as much softness and tenderness as ever I saw in a female character, she shewed more dauntless intrepidity than the stemest philosopher or the proudest hero. No torment could shake the constancy of her soul, or length of pain wear out the strength of her patience. Death was to her an object not of horror but of hope. When I heard her pour forth her last breath in thanksgivings, and saw the smile of ecstasy remain on her pale face when life was fled, I could not help crying out in the beautiful language I had lately learned from

the SACRED WRITINGS, "O death! where is thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory?"

I am now preparing to leave my excellent benefactor, and get my bread in a service, to which he has recommended me in a neighbouring family. A state of servitude, to which once I could not resolve to yield, appears no longer dreadful to me; that pride, which would have made it galling, CHRISTIANITY has subdued, though philosophy attempted it in vain. As a penitent, I should gratefully submit to mortification; but as a CHRISTIAN, I find myself superior to every mortification, except the sense of guilt. This has humbled me to the dust: but the full assurances, that are given me by the SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD, of the DIVINE pardon and favour upon sincere repentance, have calmed my troubled spirit, and filled my mind with peace and joy, which the world can neither give nor take away. Thus, without any change for the better in my outward circumstances, I find myself changed from a distracted, poor, despairing wretch, to a contented, happy, grateful being; thankful for, and pleased with my present state of existence, yet exulting in the hope of quitting it for endless glory and happiness.

O! Sir, tell the unthinking mortals, who will not take the pains of inquiring into these truths

which most concern them, and who are led by fashion and the pride of human reason, into a contempt for the SACRED ORACLES of GOD; tell them these amazing effects of the power of CHRISTIANITY; tell them this truth, which experience has taught me, that "Though VICE is constantly attended by misery, VIRTUE itself cannot confer happiness in this world, except it is animated with the hopes of eternal bliss in the world to come."

I am, &c.

FIDELIA.

A LETTER TO A NEW-MARRIED LADY.

INDEED, my dear young friend, you have highly obliged me by such a distinguishing mark of friendship and consideration, as that of finding time, on the most important day of your life, to inform me, with your own hand, of your marriage; an event most interesting to me, who wish your happiness with the sincerest ardour. You tell me you expect from me, not a letter of formal congratulation, but of serious and friendly advice on the new situations and duties in which you are going to be engaged. You wish I could be always with you to watch and direct your conduct, and seem full of that salutary fear and distrust of your own prudence, which is the best security for youth and inexperience. Whilst you retain this, I may venture to answer for you, that you will not materially deviate from the paths of duty and happiness.

I am glad you are still to remain a few weeks under the paternal roof, which has hitherto sheltered you from every evil, and where you have seen examples only of good; but, from this scene of regularity and quiet cheerfulness, you will soon

go to London, to become mistress of yourself and of a family, and to plunge at once into the hurry and bustle of a world to which you are almost a stranger. Thither will my anxious good wishes attend you; for, on the manner of your first setting out depends more than you can possibly imagine.

I know you have not been brought up in modish principles, and that you do not at present consider marriage as a title to unbounded liberty and perpetual dissipation, instead of a solemn engagement to subjection and obedience, to family cares and serious employments. You will probably, indeed, meet with people who will endeavour to laugh you out of all such regards, and who will find something very ludicrous in the idea of authority in a husband. But, whatever your opinions may be on this head, it is certain that a man of Mr. B's. generosity would be much mortified and distressed to find himself obliged to exert his authority in restraining your pleasures, particularly on his first setting out with you on the journey of life. He knows he should be universally condemned, as either jealous or covetous, should he interfere to stem the torrent of dissipation, into which it will be the business of most of your acquaintance to see you fairly plunged; for well they know that when once you are drawn into the whirlpool, more than female strength is re-

to get out of it again. Curiosity and vanity will join their temptations. You have a new face and new finery to shew, new flattery to hear, and every fine place about town to see and to be seen in.

Alas! poor Mr. B.!—What chance have you for a moments attention! and what a sudden end is here of all that dear domestic happiness to which you both looked forward with rapture a few weeks ago!—you have nothing for it but to engage as deeply in the same course, and to leave to whining swains in the country all ideas of that union of heart, that sweet intercourse of tenderness and friendship of which "soft souls in love" are apt to dream, when they think of living with the object of their wishes.

Mr. B. chose you from affection only: the superiority of his fortune, and the large field of choice which that fortune, joined with his amiable person and character, secured to him, precludes the possibility of any other motive. I, who know the disinterestedness of your nature, and the perfect freedom of rejection which your parents have always allowed you, have not the least doubt that your preference of him was the genuine effect of a real attachment, without any bias from his riches. Youth is naturally disinterested, and your heart is hitherto uncorrupted. But, my dear, the mode of living, in this too civilized part of the world, leaves scarce a [illegible] of nature, and even

youth now grows a stranger to tenderness and truth, and pursues wealth (as the means of gratifying vanity) with all the rapacity of an old usurer. It is necessary, therefore, that you should prove to your husband the sincerity of your attachment, which he may justly doubt if he sees that your happiness arises from the enjoyment of his fortune rather than of him. By a reserved and moderate use of his indulgence, by always preferring his company, and that of his particular friends, to public diversions and assemblies, by studying his taste rather than your own, and making the gratification of it your highest pleasure, you must convince him that your heart is his own; a truth which should always appear in the general tenor of your conduct, rather than in professions, or in that officious parade of affection which designing women often substitute in the place of every genuine mark of tenderness and consideration. Dean Swift,* in his coarse way, says very sensible things on the subject of displaying affection, which, however, may safely be left to your own natural delicacy: *l'amour, "de sa nature, aime le secret;"* and a person of sensibility is always averse to shewing any passion or affection before those whose sympathy is not interested in it. An amiable author† of much more delicacy than the Dean, goes so far as to advise his daughters never to shew the ex-

* *Vide* Letter to a new married Lady.

†Dr. Gregory. *Vide* Father's Legacy.

of their love, even to their husbands; a pre-
which does no honour to his own sex, and
ch would take from ours its sweetest charms,
plicity and artless tenderness. A haughty and
erious woman, who desired an undue power
r her husband, would indeed do wisely to keep
always in suspense, and conceal from him as
rfion which must increase his power and dimi-
her own; but a gentle and truly feminine na-
has no such desires, and consequently needs
uch arts. A modest heart may trust its gen-
feelings with a husband who has generosity
delicacy, and who, like yours, is untainted
h that base opinion of women, which a com-
rce with the worst of the sex always inspires.
wift, (and almost every male writer on the sub-
) pronounces that the passion of love in men
infallibly destroyed by possession, and can sub-
but a short time after marriage. What a
adful sentence must this appear to you at this
e! your heart, which feels its own affection
eased, knows not how to support the idea of
h a change in the beloved object: but, my
r friend, the God of Nature, who provided the
sion of love as the incitement to marriage, has
provided resources for the happiness of this
own institution, which kind and uncorrupted
ures will not fail to find. It is not indeed in-
ded that we should pass our lives in the deli-

rium of passion: but whilst this subsides, the habit of affection grows strong. The tumult and anxiety of desire must of course be at an end when the object is secure; but a milder and more serene happiness succeeds, which in good hearts creates a tenderness that is often wanting amidst the fervors of violent passion. Before this palls, your business is to build the solid foundation of a durable friendship. This will best be done whilst the partiality of fondness places all your excellencies in the fairest point of view, and draws a veil over your defects. This season you should take care to prolong, as far as is possible, that habit and esteem may have time to take deep root: to this end you must avoid every thing that can create a moment's disgust towards either your person or your mind. Keep the infirmities of both out of the observation of your husband more scrupulously than of any other man; and never let your idea in his imagination be accompanied with circumstances unpleasant or disgraceful. A mistress of a family cannot always be adorned with smiles. It will sometimes be incumbent on you to find faults, and human nature may sometimes fail of doing this with proper temper and dignity; therefore let it never be done in the presence of your husband. Do not disturb him with the detail of your grievances from servants or tradespeople, nor with your methods of family manage-

ment. But above all, let nothing of this kind embitter his meals when you happen to be tête-à-tête at table. In mixing with the world and its affairs, he will often meet with such things as cannot fail to hurt a mind like his, and which may sometimes affect his temper. But when he returns to his own house, let him there find every thing serene and peaceful, and let your cheerful complacency restore his good humour, and quiet every uneasy passion.

Endeavour to enter into his pursuits, catch his taste, improve by his knowledge; nor let any thing that is interesting to him appear a matter of indifference to you. Thus will you make yourself delightful to him as a companion and friend, in whom he may be always sure to find that sympathy which is the grand cement of friendship. But if you affect to speak of his pursuits as beyond your capacity or foreign to your taste, you can be no longer pleasing to him in that light, and must rely merely on your personal attractions, of which, alas, time and familiarity must every day impair the value. When you are in the country, perhaps you may sometimes find hours, and even days for each other's society, without any other company: in this case, conversation will hardly supply sufficient entertainment; and next to displeasing or disgusting him, you should of all things dread his growing dull and weary in your company. If you

can prevail upon him to read with you, to practise music with you, or to teach you a language or a science, you will then find amusement for every hour; and nothing is more endearing than such communications. The improvements and accomplishments you gain from him will be doubly valuable in his esteem; and certainly you can never acquire them so agreeably as from his lips. And though you should not naturally be disposed to the same taste in reading or amusement, this may be acquired by habit, and by a hearty desire of conforming to his inclinations and sharing in his pleasures. With such a master you will find your understanding enlarge, and your taste refine to a degree far beyond your expectations; and the sweet reward of his praises will inspire you with such spirit and diligence as will easily surmount any natural inaptitude.

Your behaviour to his particular friends and near relations will have the most important effects on your mutual happiness. If you do not adopt his sentiments with regard to these, your union must be very incomplete, and a thousand disagreeable circumstances will continually arise from it. I am told that he is an excellent son to a mother, who, with many good qualities, has defects of temper which determined him to decline her continuing to live with him after his marriage. In this he is equally kind and prudent; for though

he could himself meritoriously bear with failings to which he had been accustomed from his infancy, in a parent who doats upon him, yet this would have been too hard a task upon you, who have not an equal affection to support your duty, and to whom her ways would have been new and unusual. But though I thus far highly approve his consideration for you, yet you must remember how great a part of her happiness she is thus deprived of on your account, and make her all the amends in your power by your own attentions, as well as by promoting opportunities of indulging her in the company of her son. It would be a grevious charge on your conscience, if through your means he should become less observant of her, or diminish aught of that duty and affection which has hitherto so amiably distinguished him. Be careful therefore that no dispute may ever happen between this lady and yourself, no complaint from either of you disturb his peace, to whom it would be so painful and unnatural to take part against either. Be armed against the sallies of her temper, and predetermined never to quarrel with her, whatever she may say or do. In such a relationship, this conduct would not be meanness but merit; nor would it imply any unworthy compliance or false assent; since silence and good-humoured steadiness may always preserve sincerity in your conversation, and proper

dom in your conduct. If she should desire to
roul your actions, or to intermeddle in the af-
s of your family, more than you think is rea-
able, hear her advice with patience, and an-
r with respect, but in a manner that may let
see you mean to judge of your own duties for
urself. "I will consider of what you are so
od to observe to me.....I will endeavour to
tify whatever is amiss"....or some such gene-
answer, will probably for the time put a stop
her attempts of this kind.

Great care must be taken to proportion at least
ir outward regards with equity and good breed-
between your husband's relations and your
n. It would be happy if your feelings could
almost the same to both: but whether they
so or not, you are bound by duty and prudence
cultivate as much as possible the good will and
endship of the family to which you are now
pted, without prejudice to that affection and
itude in which I am sure you can never be
ting towards your own.

It is an important duty to avoid all dissention
disobligations with those who are nearly con-
ed with your husband, of how much greater
equence is to avoid all occasions of resent-
t between yourselves? Whatever may be said
e quarrels of *lovers*, believe me those of mar-
people have always dreadful consequences.

especially if they are not very short and
slight. If they are suffered to produce bitter
contemptuous expressions, or betray an habitual
dislike in one party of any thing in the person
mind of the other, such wounds can scarcely
be thoroughly healed: and though regard to
ciple and character lay the married couple under
a necessity to make up the breach as well as
can, yet is their affiance in each other's affection
so rudely shaken in such conflicts, that it can
hardly ever be perfectly fixed again. The painful
recollection of what is past, will often intrude on
the tenderest hours, and every trifle will revive
and renew it. You must *even now* be particularly on
your guard against this source of misery. A
married pair, from their very excess of fondness
sometimes give way to little jealousies and childish
quarrels, which at first, perhaps, quickly end in
the renewal and increase of tenderness, but
often repeated, they lose these agreeable effects
and soon produce others of a contrary nature. The
dispute grows every time more serious; jealousies
and distrusts take deeper root; the *temper is hurt*
on both sides: habits of sourness, thwarting, and
mutual misconstruction prevail, and soon over-
power all that tenderness which originally gave
them birth. Keep it then constantly in mind, that
the happiness of marriage depends entirely upon a
solid and permanent friendship, to which nothing

more opposite than jealousy and distrust. Nor are they less at variance with the true interests of passion. You can never be a gainer by taxing your husband's affection beyond its natural strength; the fear of alarming your jealousy, and bringing on a quarrel, may force him to feign a greater fondness than he feels; but this very effort and constraint will in fact diminish, and by degrees extinguish that fondness. If therefore he should appear less tender or attentive than you wish, you must either awaken his passion by displaying some new grace, some winning charm of sweetness and sensibility, or else conform (at least in appearance) to that rate of tenderness which his example prescribes; for it is your part rather modestly to follow as he leads, than make him feel the uneasiness of not being able to keep pace with you. At least one may pronounce that there is nothing less likely to increase affection than ill-humour and captiousness. The truth is, that pride rather than tenderness usually occasions the unreasonable expectations of an exceptious person, and it is rewarded as it deserves, with mortifications, and the cold dislike of those who suffer from it.

I am unwilling to sadden your present halcyon days, and the fair prospect of happiness before you, by supposing the possibility of any proper cause of jealousy—any real unkindness or in-

lity on the part of Mr. B. As far as the human character can be known and relied on, you have reason to think yourself secure from this heaviest of calamities; and nothing but irresistible proof, unsought for, and obtruded upon your senses, should ever shake your confidence and esteem. If this were to happen—if my dear tender friend should be doomed to the heart-breaking trial of seeing those looks of love changed into

> "..... hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,
> "That mocks the tear it fore'd to flow:"
>
> GRAY.

What must then be your resource?———Not rage and exclamation———not sullenness and pride———not an appeal to the world, which would laugh at your complaints, nor even to your friends, who cannot help you, unless by a separation, which would publish and complete your misfortune! The comforts and helps of religion, with a firm resolution not to be driven out of the path of duty, can alone support you under such a sorrow. The only hope of removing the cause of it must be derived from time and future contingencies, which you will watch for and improve. Sickness or disappointment may give him opportunity for reflection, and for observing the merit of that silent patience, the dignity of that uniform adherence to your duty which must force his esteem, and may at length regain his heart. If not, yours

will of course be cured of the exquisite pain of unrequited love, which cannot very long subsist in a mind of any dignity or strength. If you have children, they will supply the "aching void" with a passion not less lively than that which you will have subdued; for their sakes life will still be valuable to you, and entertained with cheerfulness. But let me hasten from a subject so unsuitable to your present situation, and to your most reasonable hopes.

I cannot but flatter myself that ladies are mightily improved since the time when Dean Swift (writing on the same occasion that I do now) exhorts his fair pupil to make no friendships with any of her own sex. This is, in effect, forbidding her to make any friendships at all; for the world, with very good reason, tolerates no male friends at your age, excepting your nearest relations. The rules of decorum, in such points, are founded on a knowledge of human nature, which young women cannot have attained, and are therefore apt to despise such rules, as founded on base ideas of the nature of friendship, or of the hearts that entertain it. But one would have supposed that the Dean had lived long enough in the world, and thought ill enough of mankind to have been convinced of the impropriety of a young lady's making her strictest intimacies and confidential attachments with persons of the other sex. But, setting

aside the danger to her reputation, and even to her morals, surely a woman who despised her own sex, and would converse with none but men, would be not less ridiculous than a man who should pass his whole time among women. Like the monkey in the fable, she would stand a chance of being rejected and disowned by both species. The reasons the Dean gives for this preposterous advice, if ever founded in truth, are certainly so no longer. You may find advantages in the conversation of many ladies, if not equal to those which men are qualified to *give*, yet equal at least to what *you, as a female*, are capable of *receiving*. Yet in one point the Dean and I agree; in recommending your husband to be your first and dearest friend, and his judgment to be consulted in the choice of every new one you may hereafter make. Those you already possess are, I believe, secure of some portion of his esteem, and he is too much interested in your constancy and fidelity of heart, to wish you to be fickle towards them. I shall therefore depend on his full consent to my having always the pleasure of styling myself

Your faithful

And affectionate friend,

H. CHAPONE.

POEMS.

WRITTEN DURING A VIOLENT STORM AT MIDNIGHT, 1749.

In gloomy pomp whilst awful midnight reigns,
And wide o'er earth her mournful mantle spreads,
Whilst deep-voic'd thunders threaten guilty heads,
And rushing torrents drown the frighted plains,
And quick-glanc'd lightnings to my dazzled sight
Betray the double horrors of the night;

A solemn stillness creeps upon my soul,
And all its pow'rs in deep attention die;
My heart forgets to beat; my stedfast eye
Catches the flying gleam; the distant roll,
Advancing gradual, swells upon my ear
With louder peals, more dreadful as more near.

Awake, my soul, from thy forgetful trance!
The storm calls loud, and Meditation wakes;
How at the sound pale Superstition shakes,
Whilst all her train of frantic Fears advance!
Children of Darkness, hence, fly far from me!
And dwell with Guilt and Infidelity!

But come, with look compos'd and sober pace,
Calm Contemplation, come! and hither lead
Devotion, that on earth disdains to tread;
Her inward flame illumes her glowing face,
Her upcast eye, and spreading wings, prepare
Her flight for heav'n, to find her treasure there.

She sees, enraptur'd, thro' the thickest gloom,
Celestial beauty beam, and, 'midst the howl
Of warring winds, sweet music charms her soul;
She sees, while rifted oaks in flames consume,
A Father-God, that o'er the storm presides,
Threatens, to save, and loves, when most he chides

OCCASIONED BY READING

SONNETS

WRITTEN IN THE STYLE AND MANNER OF SPENSER,

By T. Edwards, Esq. 1749.

BLEST Bard! to whom the Muses, grateful, gave
That pipe which erst their dearest Spenser won,
As once they found thee, pensive and alone,
Strewing sweet flow'rs upon his hallow'd grave;
Then bade thy fancy glow with sacred fire,
And softest airs thy rural verse inspire.

Again the elfin Faies and Sylphids come,
At dusky eve, or in the moonlight pale,
To the accustom'd mead, or shadowy dale,
Or where the wild wood sheds a browner gloom,
Where oft, unseen, they listen'd to the lay
Of their lov'd Colin-clout, till peep of day.

Once more they listen, while with mimic hand
Thou tun'st his rustic reed; and oft their feet,
Charm'd by thy simple verse and music sweet,
Forget the dance, and all in silence stand;
They hush the breeze, and chide the brook to peace,
And Philomel is mute till Damon cease.

But most thy strains my raptur'd spirits raise,
When love of virtue prompts thy tuneful tongue;
When * Richardson's lov'd name adorns thy song,
What honest heart but echoes back thy praise!
Sing on, sweet bard! prolong the darling theme!
Hush'd be the breeze! and mute the bab'ling stream!

Fain would I, shepherd, catch the pleasing note,
And vainly try to learn thy wond'rous skill;
So the young linnet, when with varied trill
The woodlark shakes his wildly-warbling throat,
Delighted flutters quick her trembling wing,
Tries her weak voice, and twitt'ring, aims to sing.

* Mr. Samuel Richardson, Author of Clarissa, and of Sir Charles Grandison.

SONNET TO MISS MULSO,

IN ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING.

By T. Edwards, Esq.

SWEET Linnet, who from off the laurel spray
That hangs o'er Spenser's ever sacred tomb,
Pour'st out such notes as strike the Woodlark dumb,
And vie with Philomel's enchanting lay;

How shall my verse thy melody repay?
If my weak voice could reach the age to come,
Like Colin Clout's, thy name should ever bloom
Through future times, unconscious of decay:

But my frail aid thy merits not require;
Thee Polyhymnia, in the roseate bow'rs
Of high Parnassus, 'midst the vocal throng
Shall glad receive, and to her tuneful sire
Present, where, crown'd with amaranthine flow'rs,
The raptur'd choir shall listen to thy song.

TO HEALTH.

O HEALTH! thou friend of Nature! Goddess blythe,
That oft upon the Uplands bleak art seen,
Printing with nimble step the dewy green.
To help the early mower whet his scythe,
Or with the jocund swain partake the toil
To press the plough, and break the stubborn soil;

Ah, wherefore dost thou fly me, nymph divine?
With Youth and Innocence thou lov'st to dwell,
And gentle Peace, soft whisp'ring, "all is well!"
Youth, Innocence, and gentle Peace are mine;
Nor sacred Friendship to my heart denies
Her richest treasures, and her sweetest joys.

No boist'rous passion shook my troubled frame,
To fright thee from my breast, nor pining Care,
Nor rankling Envy ever fester'd there,
Nor did Intemp'rance e'er my blood inflame;
And Grief, tho' long an inmate of my mind,
To Hope and Cheerfulness her place resign'd.

O Health, thy Napier calls, well-skill'd to save,
Foe of thy foes, and friend of human race,
Whose potent hand the tyrant Pain can chase,
And pale Disease, that points an op'ning grave;
Nor thou, ungrateful, can'st to him deny,
Thy glad return, fresh source of springing joy!

Without thee, Virtue's self forgets to smile,
And suff'ring saints with heav'n in view complain;
Philosophy, and Stoic pride how vain,
To stifle anguish, or the sense beguile!
Yet thou art often to the good unkind,
Like Fortune partial, and to merit blind.

Hast thou not left a Richardson unblest?
He woos thee still in vain, relentless maid!
Tho' skill'd in sweetest accents to persuade,
And wake soft Pity in a savage breast.
Him Virtue loves, and brightest Fame is his,
Smile thou too, Goddess, and complete his bliss.

But if regardless thou can'st hear *him* sigh,
Shall *I* not silence my presumptuous plea!
To him obdurate, wilt thou yield to me?
Ah no! to thee, mild Patience, I'll apply,
Affliction's nurse! hear thou my humbler pray'r,
And teach, the ills I may not shun, to bear!

TO A ROBIN REDBREAST.

DEAR social bird! that giv'st with fearless love
Thy tender form to man's protecting care,
Pleas'd, when rude tempests vex the ruffled air,
For the warm roof to leave the naked grove;

Kindest and last of Summer's tuneful train!
Ah! do not yet give o'er thy plaintive lay;
But charm soft Zephyr to a longer stay,
And oft renew thy sweetly parting strain.

So when rough Winter frowns with brow severe,
And chilling blasts shall strip the sheltering trees,
When meagre Want thy shiv'ring frame shall seize,
And Death, with dart uplifted, hover near,
My grateful hand the lib'ral crumbs shall give,
My bosom warm thee, and my kiss revive.

TO STELLA.

No more, my Stella, to the sighing shades,
Of blasted hope and luckless love complain;
But join the sports of Dian's careless maids,
And laughing Liberty's triumphant train.

And see, with these is holy Friendship found,
With crystal bosom open to the sight;
Her gentle hand shall close the recent wound,
And fill the vacant heart with calm delight.

Nor Prudence slow, that ever comes too late,
Nor stern-brow'd Duty, check her gen'rous flame;
On all her footsteps Peace and Honour wait,
And Slander's ready tongue reveres her name.

Say, Stella, what is Love, whose tyrant pow'r
Robs Virtue of content, and Youth of joy?
What nymph or goddess, in a fatal hour,
Gave to the world this mischief-making boy?

By lying bards in forms so various shewn,
Deck'd with false charms or arm'd with terrors vain,
Who shall his real properties make known,
Declare his nature, and his birth explain.

Some say of Idleness and Pleasure bred,
The smiling babe on beds of roses lay,
There, with sweet honey-dews by Fancy fed,
His blooming beauties open'd to the day.

His wanton head with fading chaplets bound,
Dancing, he leads his silly vot'ries on
To precipices deep o'er faithless ground,
Then laughing flies, nor hears their fruitless moan.

Some say from Etna's burning entrails torn,
More fierce than tigers on the Libyan plain,
Begot in tempests, and in thunders born,
Love wildly rages like the foaming main.

With darts and flames some arm his feeble hands,
His infant brow with regal honours crown;
Whilst vanquish'd Reason, bound with silken bands,
Meanly submissive, falls before his throne.

Each fabling poet sure alike mistakes
The gentle power that reigns o'er tender hearts!
Soft love no tempest hurls, nor thunder shakes,
Nor lifts the flaming torch, nor poison'd darts.

Heav'n-born, the brightest seraph of the sky,
For Eden's bow'r he left his blissful seat,
When Adam's blameless suit was heard on high,
A beauteous Eve first cheer'd his lone retreat.

At Love's approach all earth rejoic'd, each hill,
Each grove that learnt it from the whisp'ring gale;
Joyous the birds their liveliest chorus fill,
And richer fragrance breathes in ev'ry vale.

Well pleas'd in Paradise awhile he roves,
With Innocence and Friendship, hand in hand;
Till Sin found entrance in the with'ring groves,
And frighted Innocence forsook the land.

But Love, still faithful to the guilty pair,
With them was driv'n amidst a world of woes,
Where oft he mourns his lost companion dear,
And trembling flies before his rigid foes.

Honour, in burnish'd steel completely clad,
And hoary Wisdom, oft against him arm;
Suspicion pale, and Disappointment sad,
Vain Hopes and frantic Fears his heart alarm.

Fly then, dear Stella, fly th' unequal strife,
Since Fate forbids that Peace should dwell with Love!
Friendship's calm joys shall glad thy future life,
And Virtue lead to endless bliss above.

TO ASPASIA,

IN ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING.

BY * MISS H[redacted].

Wisdom, Aspasia, by thy gentle Muse,
Warns me to shun the dang'rous paths of Love,
And rather those of sober Friendship choose,
With cheerful Liberty, in Dian's grove.

Yet, led by Fancy through deceitful ground,
Oft have I Friendship sought, but sought in vain;
Unfaithful friends with myrtle wreaths I crown'd,
Unpleasing subjects of my plaintive strain.

In youthful innocence, a school-day friend
First gain'd my sister-vows; unhappy maid!
How did I wipe thy tears, thy griefs attend,
And how was all my tenderness repaid!

No sooner Grandeur, Love, and Fortune smil'd,
Than base Ingratitude thy heart betrays,
That friend forgot, who all thy woes beguil'd,
Lost in the sunshine of thy prosp'rous days.

* Now Mrs. D[redacted], to whose kindness Mrs. Chapone is indebted for the liberty of inserting here this elegant answer to the Ode to Stella.

ve me, kind Heav'n, from smiling Fortune's power!
And may my wishes never meet success,
e'er I can forget, one single hour,
The friend who gave me comfort in distress!

et Friendship's influence I again implor'd,
To heal the wounds by Disappointment made;
Friendship my soul to balmy Peace restor'd,
And sent a gentle virgin to my aid.

Soft, modest, pensive, melancholy Fair,
She seem'd to Love and pining Grief a prey;
I saw her fading cheek, and fear'd Despair
Fed on her heart and stole her life away.

But ah! how chang'd my friend! how vain my fears!
Not Death, but Hymen, stole her from my heart;
Another love dispell'd her sighs and tears,
And fame was left the secret to impart.

Not twice the changing moon her course had run
Since first the pleasing youth was seen and lov'd,
The fair in secret haste he woo'd and won,
No friend consulted, for no friend approv'd.

Suspense not long my anxious bosom pain'd,
My friend arriv'd—I clasp'd her to my breast,
I wept, I smil'd, alternate passions reign'd,
Till she the sad unwelcome tale confess'd.

Lost to her brother, country, and to me,
A stranger wafts her to a foreign shore,
She travels mountains, and defies the sea,
Nor thinks of Albion or of Stella more.

Sure Nature in her weakest, softest mould,
Form'd my unhappy heart, False Friendship's prey!
Another story yet remains untold,
Which fond Compassion bids me not display:

The lovely sister of a faithless friend
Weeping entreats me spare the recent tale;
Her sighs I hear, her wishes I attend,
And o'er her sister's failings draw the veil.

This my success in search of Friendship's grove,
Where Liberty and Peace I hop'd to find,
And soften'd thus with Grief, deceitful Love,
In Friendship's borrow'd garb, attack'd my mind.

No passion raging like the roaring main,
But calm and gentle as a summer sea,
Meek Modesty and Virtue in his train,
What Friendship ought, true Love appear'd to be.

But soon was chang'd, alas! the pleasing scene,
Soon threat'ning storms my timid heart alarm'd;
And Love no more appear'd with brow serene,
But cloth'd in terrors, and with dangers arm'd.

From these enchanted bowers my steps I turn,
And seek from Prudence safety and repose;
Her rigid lessons I resolve to learn,
And gain that bliss which self-approof bestows.

Thus, dear Aspasia, my unhappy fate,
My heart's first darling schemes all blasted, see;
Yet now my bosom glows, with hope elate,
Fair Friendship's blessings still to find with thee.

By thee conducted to the realms of Peace,
No more in plaintive strains the Muse shall sing,
Henceforth with hymns of praise, and grateful bliss,
The groves shall echo, and the valleys ring.

* TO PEACE.

Written during the late Rebellion, 1745.

RETURN, sweet Peace! Ah whither art thou flown
How art thou frighted from this wretched land!
Which once it pleas'd thee to protect and own,
How great! how blest! beneath thy mild command

Fair child of holy Love! companion dear
Of meek Content and smiling Innocence!
Oh! if thy gentle eyes such sight can bear,
Of Briton's sons behold the dire offence!

Behold sad Caledonia's horrid plain,
What hellish fury fires the shouting bands!
Ah see! with brother's blood their swords they stain.
Ye weeping angels, hold their murd'rous hands!

Thy banks, fair Tweed! were wont to echo sweet
The lover's wailing, and the lover's song;
Or, to the jocund pipe, the sounding feet
Of blithest lads, thy bonny berks among:

Now bright-arm'd hosts thy pleasant banks invade,
And fright thy helpless villages around;
Thy shepherds leave their flocks, and fly dismay'd;
With war's harsh din the distant rocks resound.

* This was written at a very early age, and was the author's first poetical attempt.

Th' industrious merchant's ever-anxious mind,
Opprest with care, his treasure lost deplores;
Yet curses he nor treach'rous seas, nor wind,
Nor pointed rocks unseen, nor craggy shores:

But thee he curses, oh thou most accurst!
Offspring of mad Ambition! cruel War!
Go reign in hell, be there supremely worst,
The blackest, most malignant demon far.

Whether remote in twilight shades you sleep,
Mild Peace! or choose in cottage low to dwell;
Or won by pray'r, and nurs'd in silence deep,
Hide your fair form within the hermit's cell;

Oh let Britannia's griefs thy pity move;
Return! and with thee bring a beauteous train;
Plenty and Order, Piety, and Love,
And Art, and Science, wait thy blissful reign.

Ah turn! let thy majestic looks serene
Check the wild rage of thy presumptuous foes:
Thy beamy smile shall calm the troubled scene,
Cheer my sad heart, and heal my country's woes.

TO SOLITUDE.

Thou gentle nurse of pleasing wo!
To thee, from crowds, and noise, and show,
With eager haste I fly.
Thrice welcome, friendly Solitude!
O let no busy foot intrude,
Nor list'ning ear be nigh.

Soft, silent, melancholy maid!
With thee to yon sequester'd shade
My pensive steps I bend;
Still, at the mild approach of night,
When Cynthia lends her sober light,
Do thou my walk attend!

To thee alone my conscious heart
Its tender sorrow dares impart,
And ease my lab'ring breast;
To thee I trust the rising sigh,
And bid the tear that swells mine eye
No longer be supprest.

With thee among the haunted groves
The lovely sorc'ress Fancy roves,
O let me find her here!
For she can time and space control,
And swift transport my fleeting soul
To all it holds most dear!

Ah no!—ye vain delusions hence!
No more the hallow'd influence
Of Solitude pervert!
Shall Fancy cheat the precious hour,
Sacred to Wisdom's awful pow'r
And calm Reflection's part?

O Wisdom! from the sea-beat shore
Where, list'ning to the solemn roar,
Thy lov'd * Eliza strays,
Vouchsafe to visit my retreat,
And teach my erring, trembling feet
Thy heav'n-protected ways!

Oh guide me to the humble cell
Where Resignation loves to dwell
Contentment's bow'r in view.
Nor pining Grief with Absence drear,
Nor sick Suspense, nor anxious Fear,
Shall there my step pursue.

There let my soul to *Him* aspire
Whom none e'er sought with vain desire,
Nor lov'd in sad despair!
There, to his gracious will divine
My dearest, fondest hope resign,
And all my tend'rest care!

* Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, a lady well known to the literary world, author of a beautiful Ode to Wisdom.

Then Peace shall heal this wounded breast,
That pants to see another blest,
From selfish passion pure;
Peace, which when human wishes rise
Intense, for aught beneath the skies,
Can never be secure.

TO WINTER.

HAIL WINTER! venerable sage!
Whose provident and sparing age
In lean and naked poverty appears,
Whilst all thy treasure thou dost hide,
Lock'd in some mountain's hollow side,
With future blessings to enrich thy heirs.

First, youthful SPRING, fantastic maid,
In green embroidered robe array'd,
Thy store with all her gay attire supplies:
Enrich'd by thee, she flings her sweets
With lavish hand on all she meets,
"Her bells and flow'rets of a thousand dyes."

The fertile earth, with softening rain
By thee prepar'd to ev'ry grain
A safe retreat within her bosom yields:
Thy snowy mantle covers o'er,
With kindly warmth, the golden store
That SUMMER pours on Ceres' waving fields.

Pomona's trees their nourish'd root,
Their folded bud, and infant shoot,
Owe to thy cautious age and patient care:
With riches gather'd from thy hoard
Pale AUTUMN's plenteous horn is stored,
That may with SUMMER's boasted sheaves compare.

What tho' thy rigid hand refuse
One wreath to crown my vent'rous muse,
One flow'r to grace my unadorned lays,
Yet love shall tune my grateful voice,
Nor shall my thankless heart rejoice
In silent bliss, unmindful of thy praise.

Rescued by thee from gloomy fears,
From restless wishes, anxious cares,
And all the sorrows that on Absence wait,
By thee restored to ev'ry joy
That tender Friendship can supply,
To all my fondest pray'rs had ask'd of Fate,

Shall not my reed be tuned for thee,
Thou friend of sweet Society?
Patron of rational serene delights!
Welcome thy keen enliv'ning frost!
Thy doubtful days in twilight lost!
Welcome thy long-protracted social nights!

Tho' FANCY flies thy sullen reign,
And ev'ry Muse forsakes the plain,
Nor haunts the leafless grove, nor ice-bound stream,
PHILOSOPHY and REASON view
Thy hoary head with rev'rence due,
And bid thy horrors raise their solemn theme.

Well pleas'd thy hollow voice they hear
Among the naked branches drear,
Or through the vaulted cavern bellowing loud;
Or listen studious to the sound
Of rushing waters, pouring round,
From the black bosom of the impending cloud.

Thee glad DEVOTION's heav'n-taught lays
Shall welcome! She, with constant praise,
Meets each appointment of great Nature's King.
Thy dear return with blessings fraught,
Shall ever wake my grateful thought,
And annual off'rings to thy fane I'll bring.

L'ESTATE METASTASIO.

Ora che niega i doni suoi
La stagion de' fiori amica,
Cinta il crin di bionda spica
Volge a noi
L'Estate il piè.
E già sotto al raggio ardente
Così bollono l' arene
Che alla barbara Cirene
Più cocente
Il sol non é

Più non hanno i primi albori
Le lor gelide rugiade;
Più dal ciel pioggia non cade,
Che ristori
E l'erba, e'l fior:
Alimento il fonte, il rio
Al terren più non comparte,
Che si fende in ogni parte
Per desio
Di nuovo umor.

Polveroso al sole in faccia
Si scolora il verde faggio,
Che di frondi al nuovo maggio
Le sue braccia
Rivestì.

SUMMER. FROM METASTASIO.

FAREWELL, mild Spring! farewell, each early flow'r
On the soft bank or verdant meadow born!
SUMMER advances to assert her pow'r,
Her yellow tresses crown'd with ears of corn.

The streams decrease beneath the solar ray,
Shrink from its rage, and leave the burning sand;
Not more oppressive beams, the raging day
Points on the parch'd Cirene's barb'rous land.

No more the morning sheds her frosty dews,
While no rude winds her gentle hours disturb;
Nor fruitful rain from equal heav'n renews
Each beauteous flow'ret and salubrious herb.

No more the fountain, or the wand'ring stream,
Pours its abundance o'er th' irriguous plain;
Earth gapes beneath the sun's relentless beam,
And vainly asks the cool refreshing rain.

Discolour'd, dry, the tall majestic beech,
That MAY had freshly clothed in vivid green,
And bade his broad arms, wide projected, reach
The pride, the glory of the sylvan scene,

Ed ingrato al suol natio
Fuor del tronco ombra non stende,
Nè dal sol l'acque disende
Di quel rio
Che lo nutrì.

Molle il volto, il sen bagnato,
Dorme steso in strana guisa
Su la messe già recisa
L'affannato
Mietitor:
E con man pietosà, e pronte
Va tergendogli la bella
Amorosa villanella
Della fronte
Il suo sudor.

Là su l'arido terreno
Scemo il Can d'ogni vigore
Langue accanto al suo signore
E nè meno
Osa latrar;
Ma tramanda al seno oppresso
Per le fauci inaridite
Nuove sempre aure gradite
Con lo spesso
Respirar.

Withers, ungrateful to its native ground,
And scarce beyond the trunk its shadows spread;
No shelt'ring leaves protect with coolness round
The friendly rill that long its branches fed.

His face and bosom bathed in honest sweat,
The weary reaper throws him careless down,
Stretch'd on the swarth, and, thro' the mid-day heat,
Sleeps on the harvest that his labours crown:

Whilst, with a ready and a tender hand,
The village-maid, to love and Corin true,
Intent and silent takes her careful stand,
And from his forehead wipes the trickling dew.

On the scorch'd ground, near his lov'd master, lies
The panting Dog, whose clammy jaws now fail
To give the watchful bark, and oft he tries,
With quick short breath, to catch the grateful gale.

Quel Torel, ch' innamorava
Del suo ardir ninfe, e pastori
Se ne' tronchi degli allori
S'avezzava
A ben serir,
Del ruscello or su le sponde
Lento giace, e mugge, e guata
La giovenca innamorata,
Che risponde
Al suo muggir.

Per timor del caldo raggio
L'augellin non batte l'ale,
Alle stridule cicale
Cede il faggio
L'ufignuol.
Mostran già spoglie novelle
Le macchiate antiche Serpi,
Che ravvolte a' nudi sterpi
Si fan belle
In faccia al fol.

Al calor del lungo giorno
Senton là ne' salsi umori
Anche i muti abitatori,
Che il soggiorno
Intiepidì :

The youthful Bull, whom oft the ructic swain
With wonder saw exert his dauntless might,
No more, with butting forehead, rules the plain,
Nor wounds the bending trees in mimic fight.

Laid on the margin of the scanty rill,
Lowing, he watches his lov'd Heifer near;
Whose faint responsive moans no longer fill
Heav'n's echoing vault, but feebly strike the ear.

No more with nimble wing the feather'd race
In the fierce eye of day advent'rous tow'r;
The Nightingale resigns her ruin'd sprays,
And noisy Grasshoppers usurp the bow'r.

But the sleek Serpents, by the genial fires
Reviv'd, desert their faded sloughs, and bold,
Round the bare branch weaving their agile spires,
Blaze to the sun in renovated gold.

The mute inhabitants that coolly play,
And in their native briny waters lave,
Feel the long rigours of the Summer's day,
And dread the changes of the tepid wave.

E da' loro antri muscosi
Più non van scorrendo il mare ;
Ma fra'sassi, e l'alghe amare
Stanno ascosi
A' rai del dì.

Pur l'Estate tormentosa,
S'io rimiro, amata Fille,
Le tue placide pupille,
Si penosa
A me non è :
Mi conduca il cieco Dio
Fra' Numidi, o al Mar gelato,
Io sarò sempre beato,
Idol mio,
Vicino a te.

Benchè adusta abbia la fronte
Con le curve opposte spalle,
Una ombrosa opaca valle
Cela il monte
Al caldo sol :
Là dall' alto in giù cadendo
Serpe un rio limpido, e vago,
Che raccolto in picciol lago
Va nutrendo
Il verde suol.

Near the hot surface they forbear to glide,
In mossy caves or coral grottos laid
Beneath the dark projecting rocks they hide,
Or where the bitter sea-weed lends its shade.

Yet will not I deplore the painful heat,
Tho' SUMMER drives her burning car so nigh,
When my fond looks my lovely Phillis greet,
And the soft languish of her modest eye.

Lead me, blind God, if such thy wild decree,
To Afric's sands with ceaseless heats opprest,
Or where cold Zembla views her frozen sea,
Sure, if with thee, my fairest, to be blest.

And see, my love, beneath that mountain's height,
That bares its shoulder to the burning skies,
Cool, and protected from oppressive light,
Form'd for retreat, the shady valley lies.

There down the rocks the winding riv'lets flow,
Thro' shaggy brakes their limpid streams are seen,
Which, gather'd in the crystal lake below,
Nourish the fertile vale's perennial green.

Là del sol dubbia è la luce,
Come suol notturna luna,
Nè pastor greggia importuna
Vi conduce
A pascolar:
E se v'entra il sol furtivo,
Vedi l'ombra delle piante
Al variar d'aura incostante
Dentro il rivo
Tremolar.

Là, mia vita, uniti andiamo,
Là cantando il dì s'inganni:
Per timor di nuovi affanni
Non lasciamo
Di gioir.
Che raddoppia i suoi tormenti,
Chi con occhio mal sicuro
Fra la nebbia del futuro
Va gli eventi
A prevenir.

Me non sdegni il biondo Dio,
Me con Fille unisca Amore;
E poi sfoghi il suo rigore
Fato rio,
Nemico ciel.

There the sun's doubtful light, attemper'd, shews
Like the mild lustre of the nightly moon;
No shepherd the sequester'd shelter knows,
Nor thither leads th' intruding flock at noon.

Should through the gloom the stealthy sun prevail,
See from his ray the scene new beauties take;
The margin plants, mov'd by the varying gale,
Reflected wave along the trembling lake.

In that sweet spot together let us live;
The tedious day shall hasten while we sing;
Content and joy the present hour shall give,
And hide the ills futurity may bring:

For woes on woes that anxious wretch pursue,
And on his soul fantastic terrors crowd,
Who dares with eye distrustful stretch his view
Where Fate has spread her providential cloud.

Let but the fair-hair'd God confirm my state,
In silken bands to my lov'd Phillis led,
Let adverse seasons then and cruel Fate
Exhaust their rigours on my patient head.

me nor wealth, nor glitt'ring pomp allure,
heir specious charms no more my heart engage,
shall it shrink, affrighted, to endure
he lazy frost of chill enervate age:

r then, with bending back, and snowy beard,
And trembling hand, I'll touch th' accustom'd string,
nd still, with partial ear by Phillis heard,
To Love and her, in hoarser accents sing;

still on those faded eyes my sight I'll rest,
No longer kindling at her lover's songs;
And print, while pressing to my faithful breast,
Cold kisses on the hand I lov'd so long.

Ye who at ease on ether soft recline,
Indulgent hear this only fond desire!
Oh hear, for gentle pity, Pow'rs divine!
And grant me still my Phillis and my lyre!

Then, would penurious Fate the pray'r regard,
And spin my days beyond the thousandth year,
Still to the bosom of their grateful bard
My lyre and Phillis should be ever dear.

SONNETTO.

QUAL agnellina dal sentiero uscita,
E'l pastor e l'ovil posto in oblio,
Molt' anni errò, lungi da té, mio dio,
Da té, vero Pastor, l'alma fuggita.

Se mirò vago rio, valle fiorita,
Colá rivolse il giovenil desio,
Ma sempre amari i fior, torbide il rio
Ella trovò, dal proprio error tradita.

Ond'hor, cangiato alfin l'incauto stile,
Gia del suo lungo vaneggiar si pente,
E a té ritorna ed al tuo fido ovile:
Deh l'accogli, O Signor! se'l ciel lucente
Un di cangiasti con capanna umile
Per lei sottrar d'infernal lupo al dente.

TRANSLATION OF THE FOREGOING SONNET.

How like a wanton lamb, that careless play'd,
The shepherd and the fold forgotten quite,
My vagrant soul, in search of vain delight,
Many long years from her true Shepherd stray'd!

If winding stream or flow'ry vale she spied,
Thither her youthful wishes eager led;
But bitter were the flow'rs on which she fed,
The turbid stream no cooling draught supplied.

Thus oft beguil'd, at length her fruitless range,
Her heedless wand'ring steps, she deeply mourns,
And back to thee and to thy fold returns.
Receive her, dearest Lord! who once didst change
Heav'n's brightest mansion for a roof of straw,
To snatch her from the wolf's devouring jaw.

AN IRREGULAR ODE.

TO MRS. ELIZ. CARTER.

Who had recommended to me the Stoic Philosophy, as productive of Fortitude; and who was about to publish a Translation of Epictetus.

I.

COME, Epictetus, arm my breast
With thy impenetrable steel,
No more the wounds of grief to feel,
Nor mourn, by others' woes deprest.
O teach my trembling heart
To scorn Affliction's dart!
Teach me to mock the Tyrant Pain!
For see, around me stand
A dreadful murd'rous band!
I fly their cruel pow'r in vain!
Here lurks DISTEMPER's horrid train,
And *there* the PASSIONS lift their flaming brands;
These with fell rage my helpless body tear,
While *those*, with daring hands,
Against th' immortal soul their impious weapons rear.

II.

I turn fresh evils meet my eyes;
orrow, and Disgrace
the human race!
he bed of sickness, VIRTUE lies!

See FRIENDSHIP bleeding by the sword
Of base INGRATITUDE!
See baleful JEALOUSY intrude,
And poison all the bliss that LOVE had stor'd.
Oh seal my ears against the piteous cry
Of Innocence distrest!
Nor let me shrink when Fancy's eye
Beholds the guilty wretch's breast
Beneath the tort'ring pincers heave!
Nor for the num'rous wants of Mis'ry grieve,
Which all-disposing Heav'n denies me to relieve!

III.

No longer let my fleeting joys depend
On social or domestic ties!
Superior let my spirit rise,
Not in the gentle counsels of a friend,
Nor in the smiles of love expect delight:
But teach me in MYSELF to find
Whate'er can please or fill my mind.
Let inward beauty charm the mental sight;
Let godlike Reason, beaming bright,
Chase far away each gloomy shade,
Till VRITUE's heavenly form display'd
Alone shall captivate my soul,
And her divinest love possess me whole!

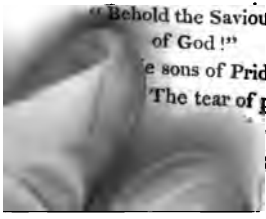
IV.

But ah! what means this impious pride,
Which heav'nly hosts deride?

Within MYSELF does Virtue dwell?
Is all serene and beauteous there?
What mean these chilling damps of fear?
Tell me, Philosophy! thou boaster! tell:
This godlike all-sufficient mind,
Which, in its own perfection blest,
Defies the woes or malice of mankind
To shake its self-possessing rest,
Is it not foul, weak, ignorant, and blind?
Oh man! from conscious Virtue's praise
Fall'n, fall'n!—what refuge can'st thou find?
What pitying hand again will raise
From native earth thy groveling frame?
Ah, who will cleanse thy heart from spot of sinful blame?

V.

But see! what sudden glories from the sky
To my benighted soul appear,
And all the gloomy prospect cheer!
What awful form approaches nigh?
Awful, yet mild, as is the southern breeze
That whispers through the rustling trees,
And gently bids the forest nod.
Hark! thunder breaks the air, and angels speak!
"Behold the Saviour of the world! behold the Lamb of God!"
e sons of Pride, behold his aspect meek!
The tear of pity on his cheek!



See in his train appear
HUMILITY, and PATIENCE sweet;
REPENTANCE, prostrate at his sacred feet,
Bedews with tears, and wipes them with her flowing hair!

VI.

What scenes now meet my wond'ring eyes!
What hallow'd grave,
By mourning maids attended round,
Attracts the Saviour's steps? what heart-felt wound
His spotless bosom heaves with tender sighs?
Why weeps the son belov'd, omnipotent to save?
But lo! he waves his awful hand;
The sleeping clay obeys his dread command.
O "*Lazaru! come forth!*"—come forth, and see
The dear effects of wond'rous love!
He, at whose word the seas and rocks remove,
Thy Friend, thy Lord, thy Maker, weeps for thee!

VII.

Thy walls, Jerusalem, have seen thy King,
In meekness clad, lament thy hapless fate!
Unquench'd his love, tho' paid with ruthless hate!
O lost, relentless Sion! didst thou know
Who thus vouchsafes thy courts to tread,
What loud Hosannas wouldst thou sing!
How eager crown his honour'd head!
Nor see unmov'd his kind paternal woe,
Nor force his tears, his precious blood, for thee to flow!

VIII.

No more repine, my coward soul,
The sorrows of mankind to share,
Which he who could the world control
Did not disdain to bear!
Check not the flow of sweet fraternal love,
By Heav'ns high King in bounty giv'n,
Thy stubborn heart to soften and improve,
Thy earth-clad spirit to refine,
And gradual raise to love divine,
And wing its soaring flight to Heav'n!

IX.

Nor thou, ELIZA, who from early youth,
By Genius led, by Virtue train'd,
Hast sought the fountain of eternal truth,
And each fair spring of knowledge drain'd,
Nor thou, with fond chimeras vain,
With Stoic pride and fancied scorn
Of human feelings, human pain,
My feeble soul sustain!
Far nobler precepts should thy page adorn.
O, rather guide me to the sacred source
Of real wisdom, real force,
Thy life's unerring rule!
To thee fair Truth her radiant form unshrouds,
Tho', wrapp'd in thick impenetrable clouds,
She mock'd the labour[illegible] Grecian school.

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